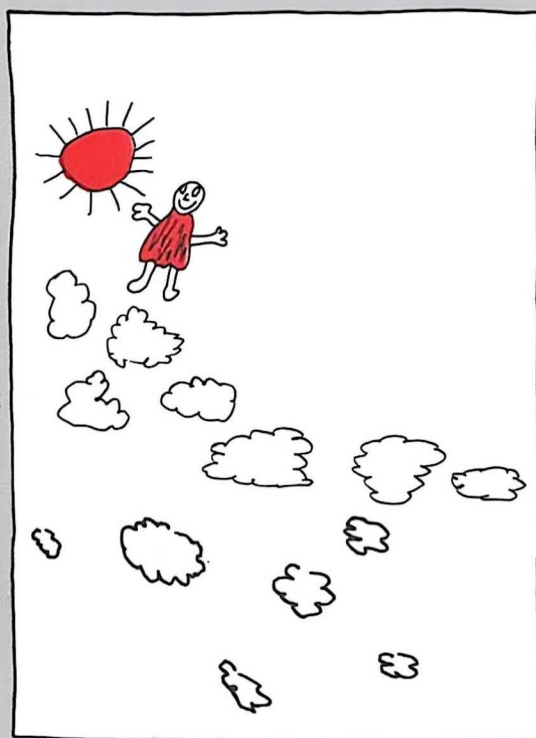
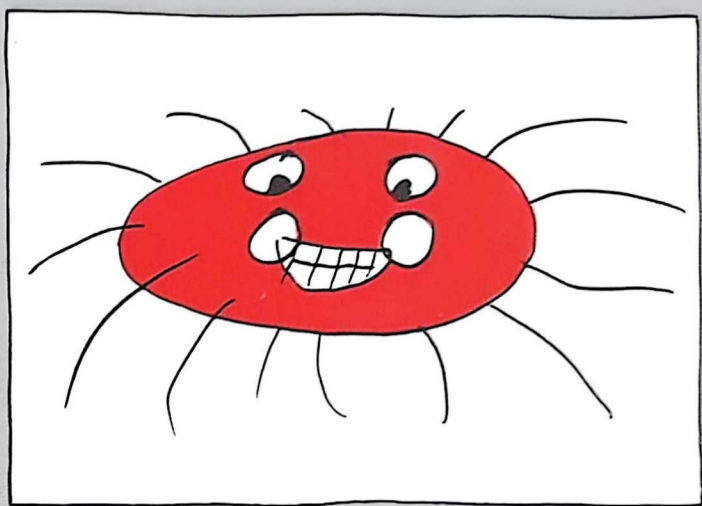
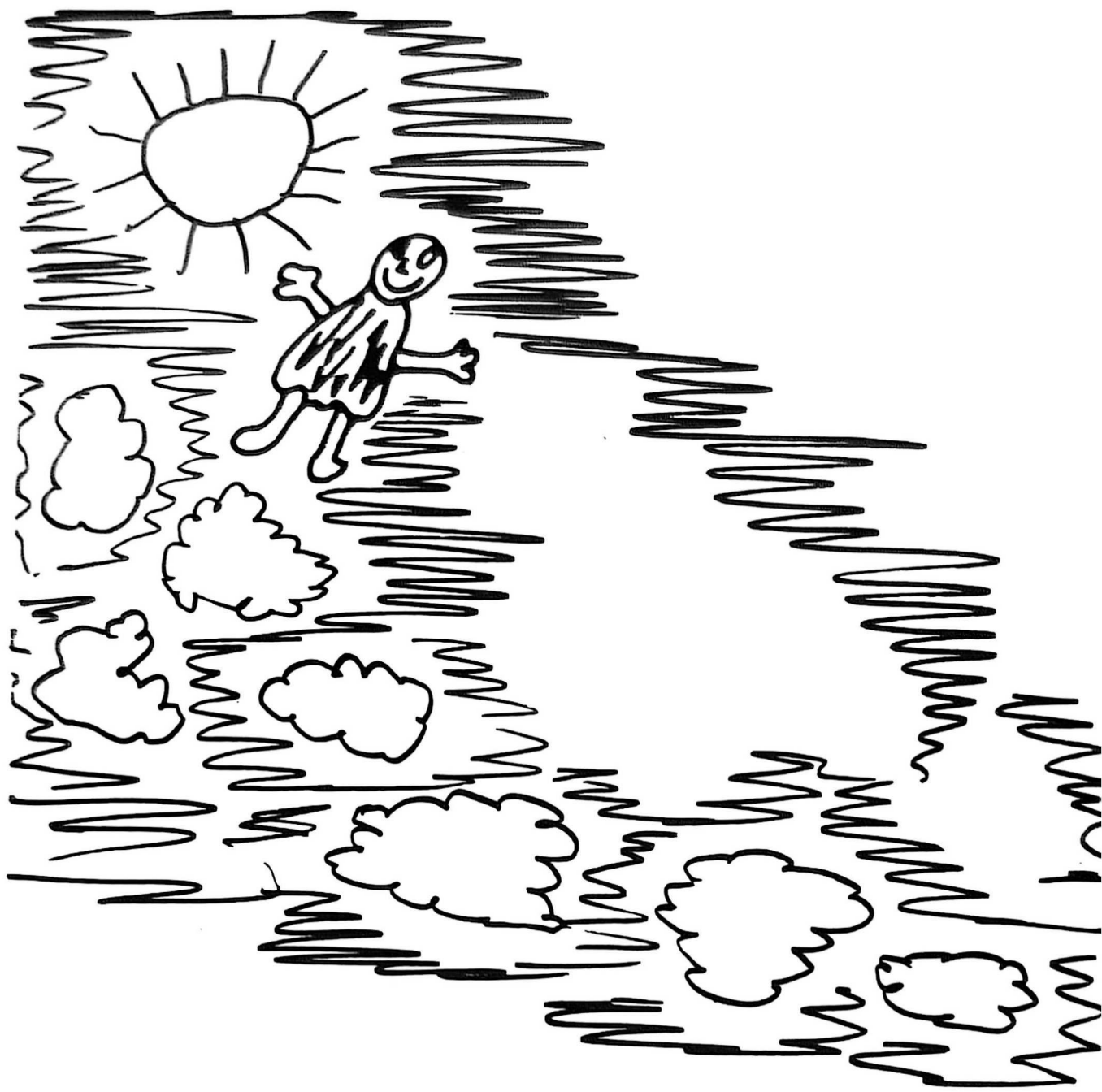


CHILDRENS' PICTURES OF GOD.





CHILDREN'S PICTURES OF GOD

V. Peter Pitts

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by
Robert Olbrycht



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Schenectady, New York 12305

This book is dedicated to Steve Wieting, Chuck Clemence, Ruth Ratliff, and Sue Schmidt, without whose help I could never have accomplished this task. This book is also dedicated, of course, to God, without whose existence there would be no book to be written.

PREFACE

In the Fall of 1974 I set out on a quest to discover a picture of GOD. However, I did not approach rabbis, gurus, priests, bishops, philosophers, ministers, or theologians. If I had, it is certain I would have received a lot of words, but *no* pictures. Adults, I have found, are most unimaginative in depicting GOD. Instead, I went to the true experts—children—and I began my quest.

With their great imagination and clarity of vision, children can say more to us about GOD in one picture than adults can say in volumes of words. Having collected over six hundred pictures of GOD from children six-to-nine years old, I can make one main generalization: children are both extremely impressionable and perceptive. Very little that is taught them in Sunday School escapes their notice. Each picture of GOD is unique. Yet, in some way, each also reflects the formal theology of the church or synagogue from which it came. The children have proven to me that the old adage, “We *all* believe in the *same* GOD anyway!” is shallow and misleading.

As I put together the pictures for this book, I thought of all the weekends my wife and friends and I spent sitting on kindergarten-size chairs, with our knees to our chins, watching the children draw their pictures of God. Some looked puzzled. Some cried when they couldn’t think of what to draw, or how to draw it. Eyes darted from side to side or scanned the walls. Lips pursed, feet fidgeted and, in the midst of the scratching sounds of Number Two lead pencils, came the unmistakable sound of Number Two lead pencil erasers rubbing away stray lines. Some students hesitated. Others rushed into their task with incredible enthusiasm.

When we requested the children to draw pictures of God, we were met by a variety of sounds, ranging from total silence to expressions such as, "Oh, no!" or "I can't do that!" or "Oh, boy!" or "I don't know what to draw!" or "I'm done! (handing me a blank sheet of paper)" or other miscellaneous grunts, groans, and expressions of delight. As you will see in the pictures, some students enjoyed drawing the pictures. We were, in fact, met by few protests.

I wish I could have sat in on some of the class discussions which followed our visits. The Sunday School teachers and the clergy were very helpful both in setting up the picture drawing sessions and in evaluating and interpreting the results of the study. Some Sunday School teachers remarked that they were going to make picture drawing a permanent part of their curricula.

We visited a total of twenty-one churches and synagogues throughout a four-state area in the Midwest. The pictures in this book were drawn by children in Mormon, Mennonite, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Jewish, and Unitarian-Universalist congregations. The parents of the children signed permissions slips allowing me to conduct my research. A number of publications have ensued, including my Master's Thesis, which has a title long enough to confuse anyone. This book (thank goodness!) is not intended either to analyze or to confuse. It is intended to delight, amuse, and stimulate one's natural curiosity about the form and nature of GOD.

The pictures in this book are all actual pictures of GOD drawn by children in Sunday School situations. Because some pictures were drawn too lightly or too small to reproduce effectively, I have taken the freedom to darken lines, to center or enlarge pictures, and to delete obvious erasures or attempted erasures. However, I have made every effort to preserve the original form and content of each of the pictures.

The actual text of this book was not written by the children who drew the pictures. Instead, it is my attempt to make the pictures flow together as smoothly as possible.

My apologies to those children who, in looking through this book, may say: "I didn't mean that GOD looked like _____, or was doing _____." We interviewed some of the children but, for the most part, I have inferred meanings from the pictures themselves.

Since my quest began, I have developed a great respect for and awe of children's theological abilities. Adults can learn much from the simplicity and spontaneity of children. But, even more than that, I have developed an appreciation for the religious denominations within which the children I have studied are growing up. Each of us has our own idea of whom GOD is. Any piece of paper is both too small and too large to capture GOD with a Number Two lead pencil. It appears my quest will never end . . . thank GOD!

V. Peter Pitts (Editor)
Wartburg College
Waverly, Iowa

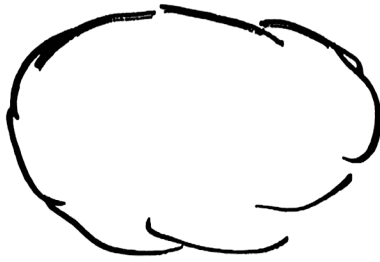
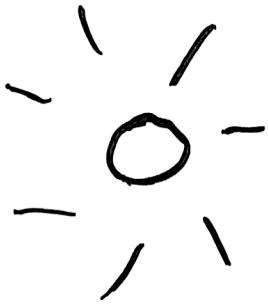
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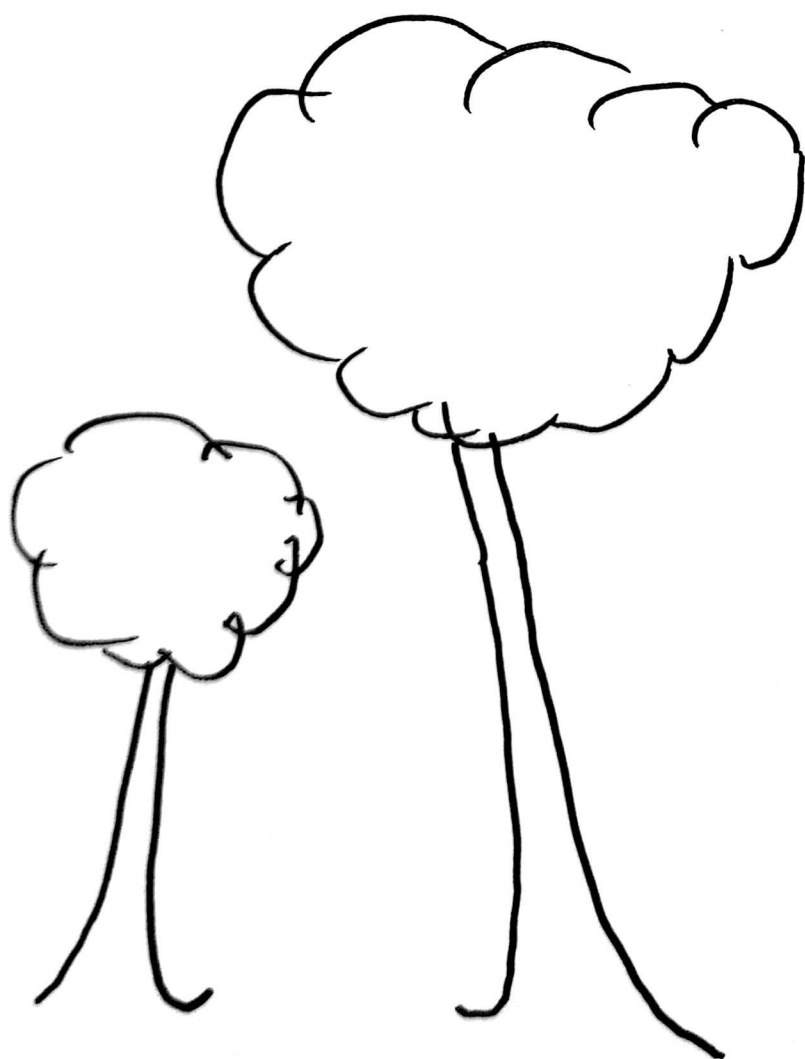
1.

What Does God
Look Like?

God looks
a



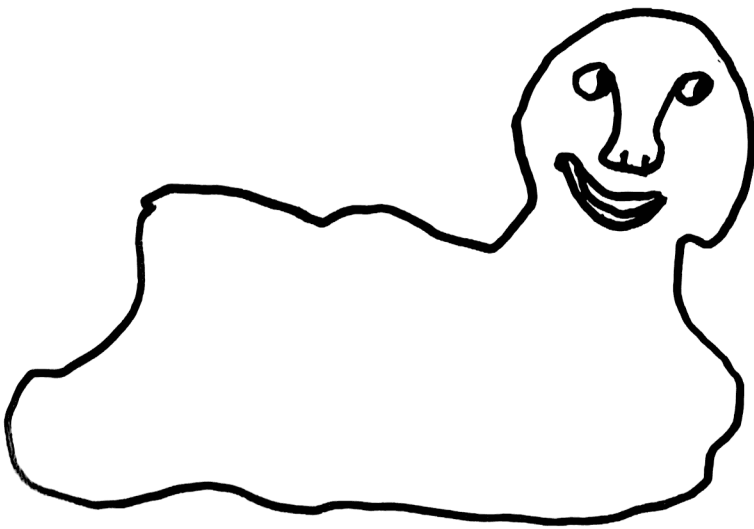
like:
little
bird...



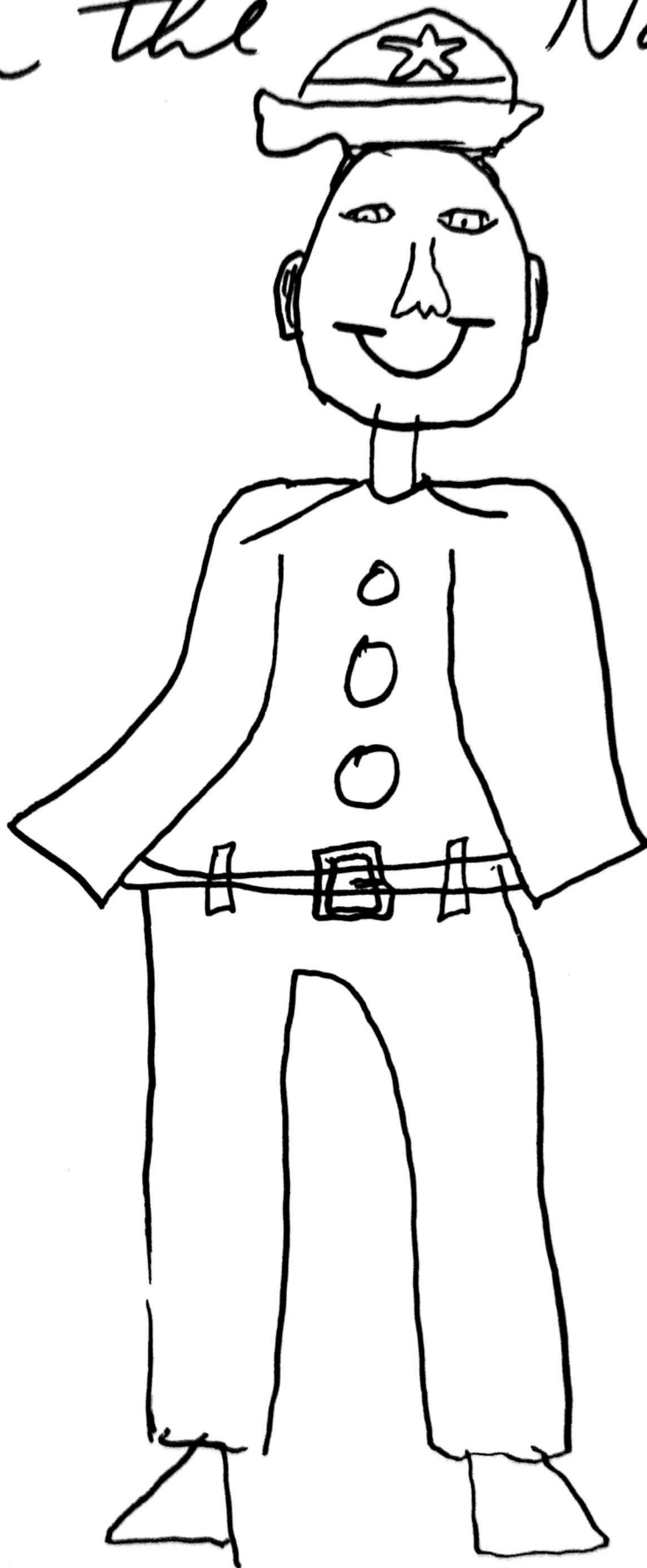
... my big brother
in college ...



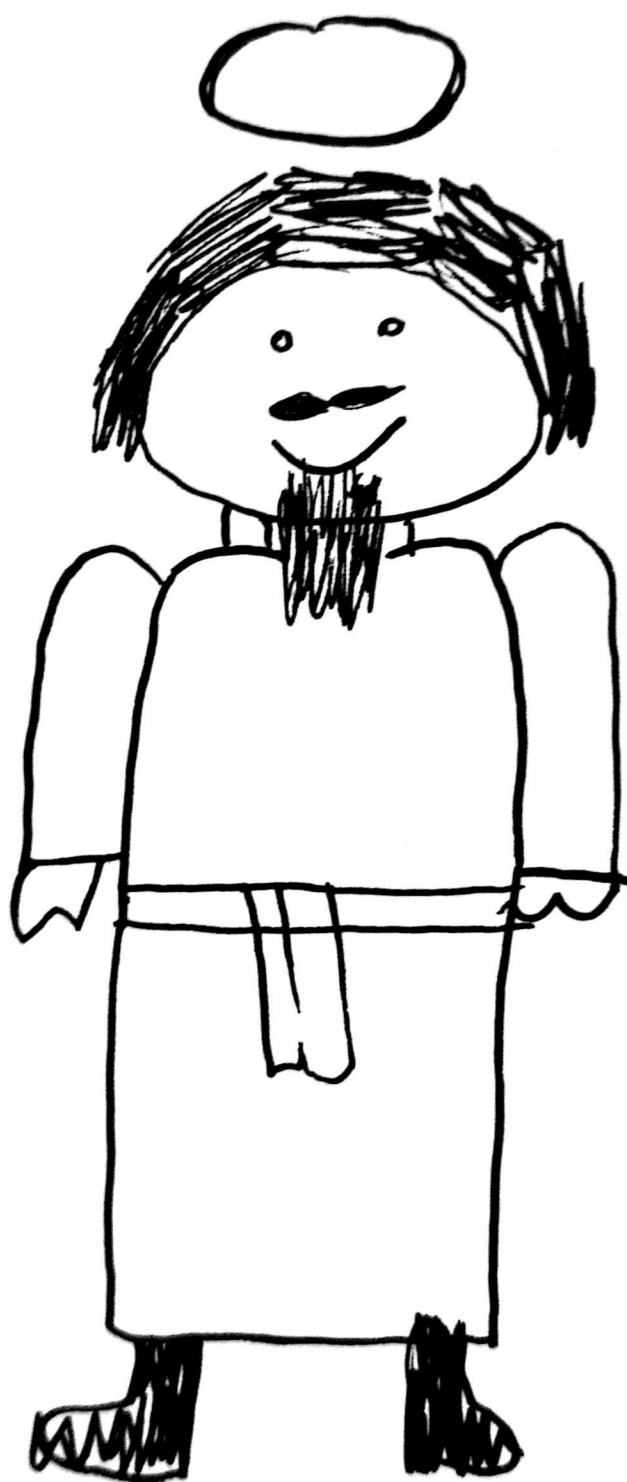
... a little
lamb...



...My big brother
in the Navy..



...the Catholic
Priest...



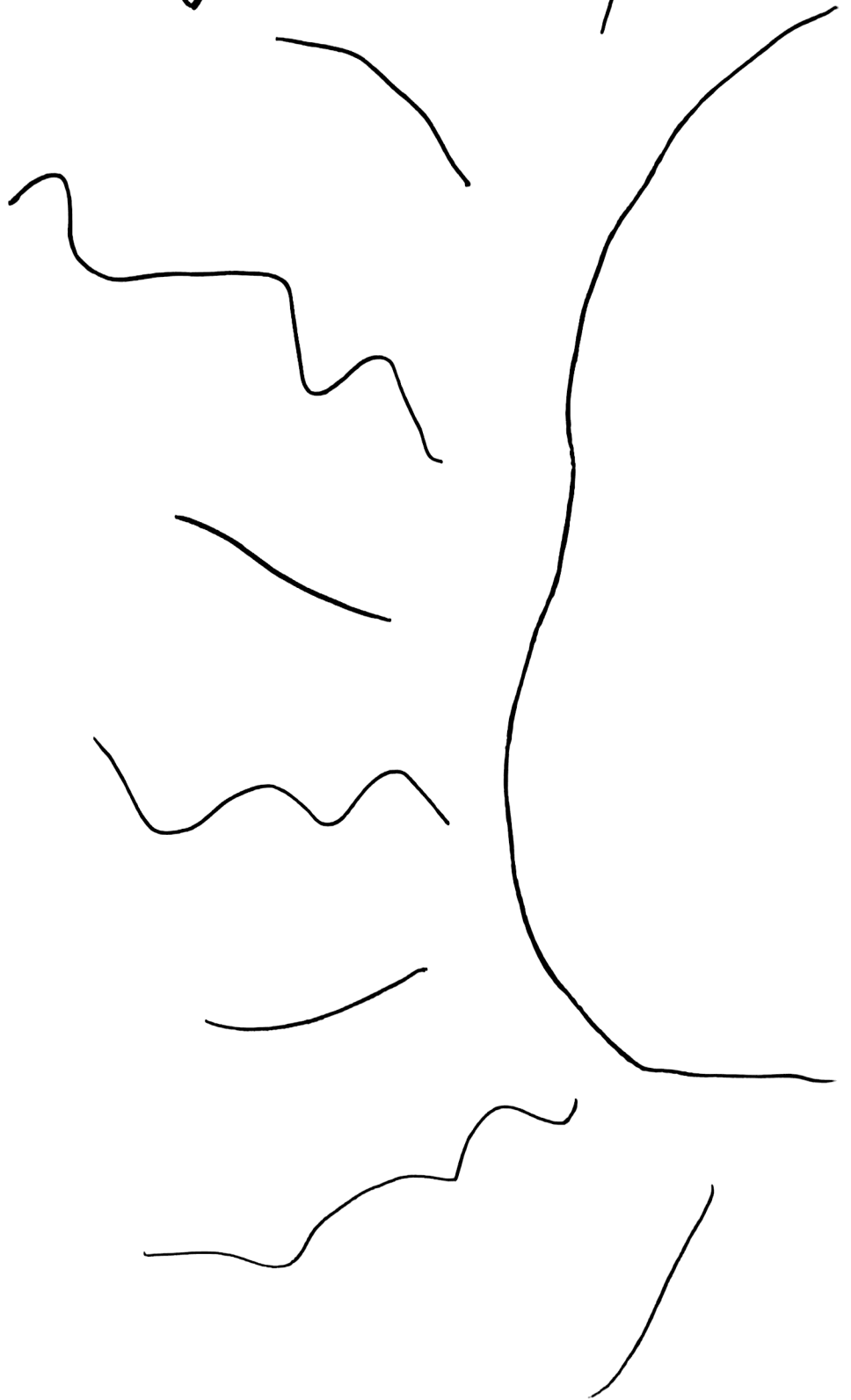
... a pilgrim ...



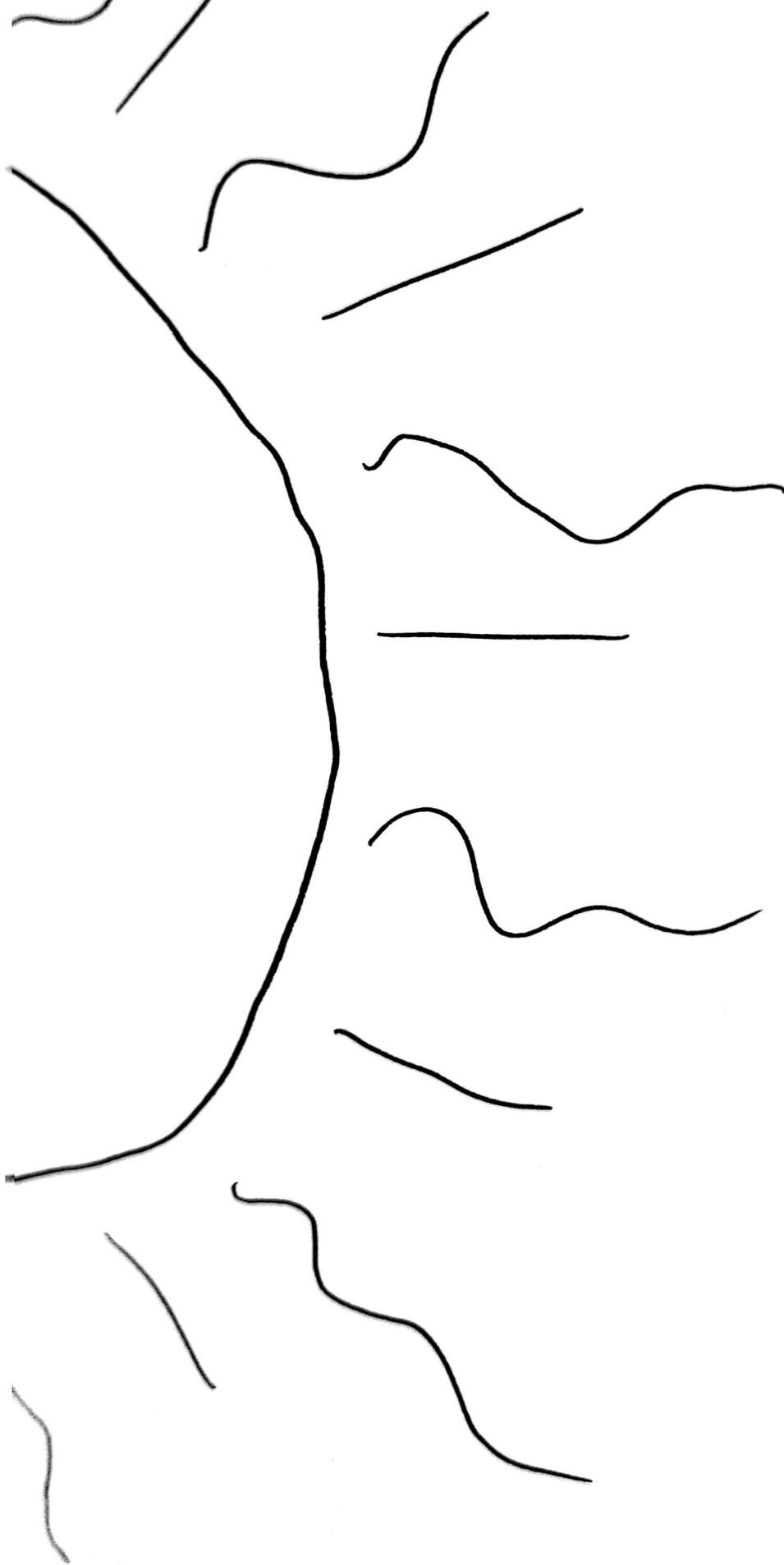
... an old man
with a cane ...



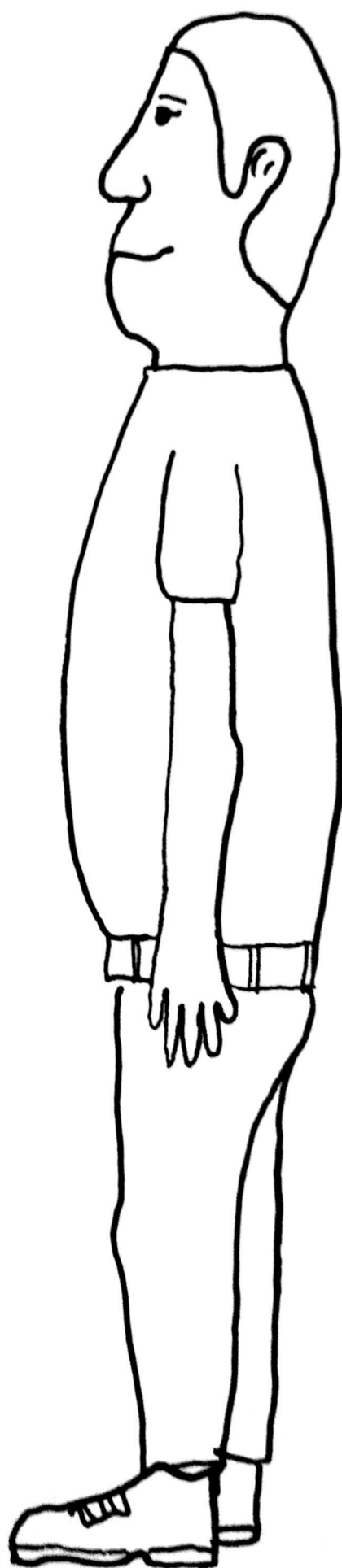
...the sun, became
powerful...



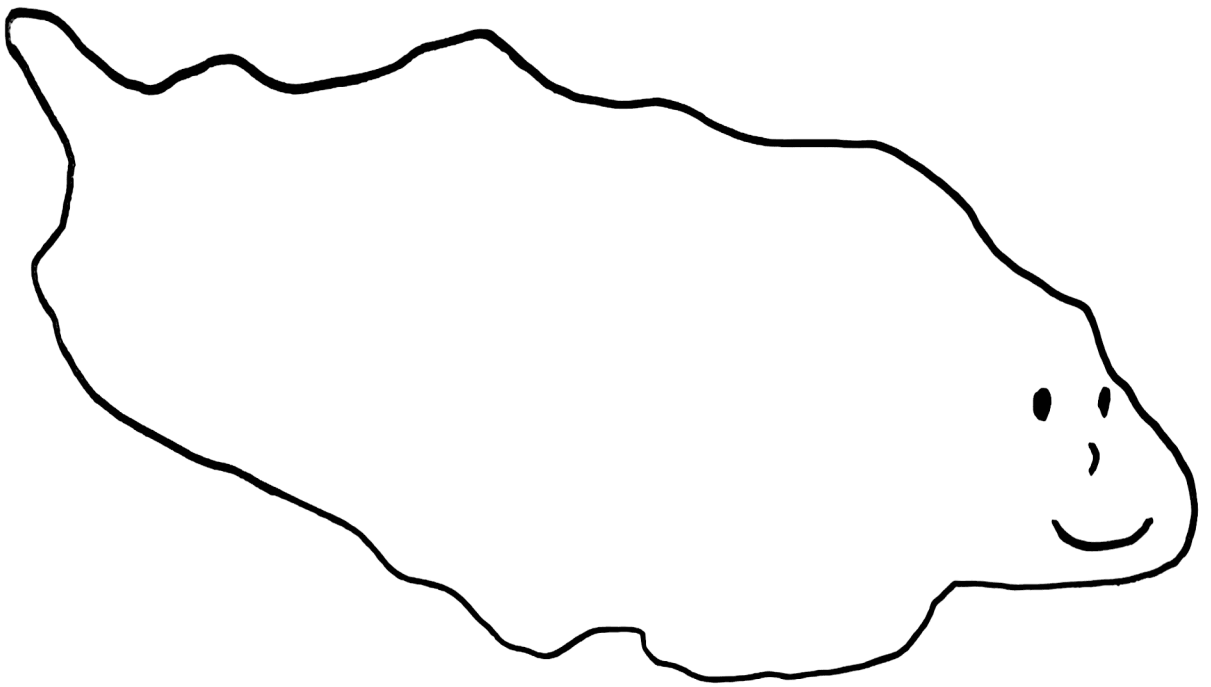
God is so



... my
dad ...



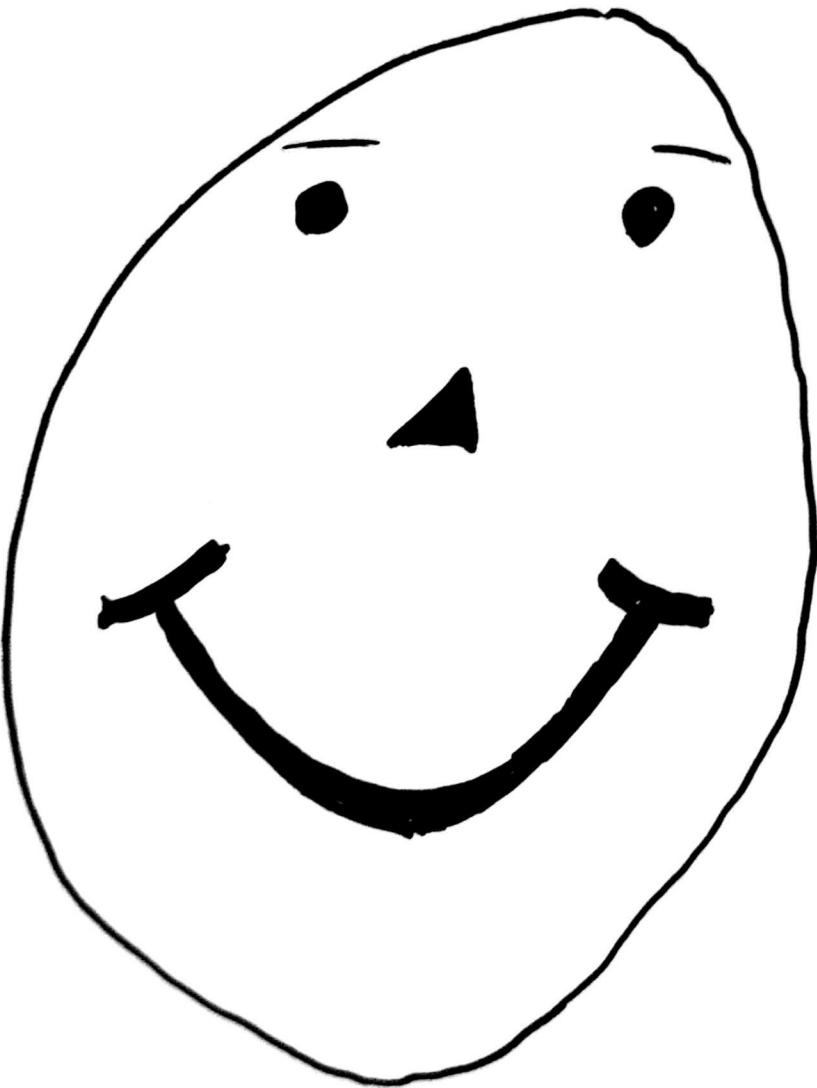
... a big, fluffy
cloud...



... an angel ...



... a "Smiley Button" ...

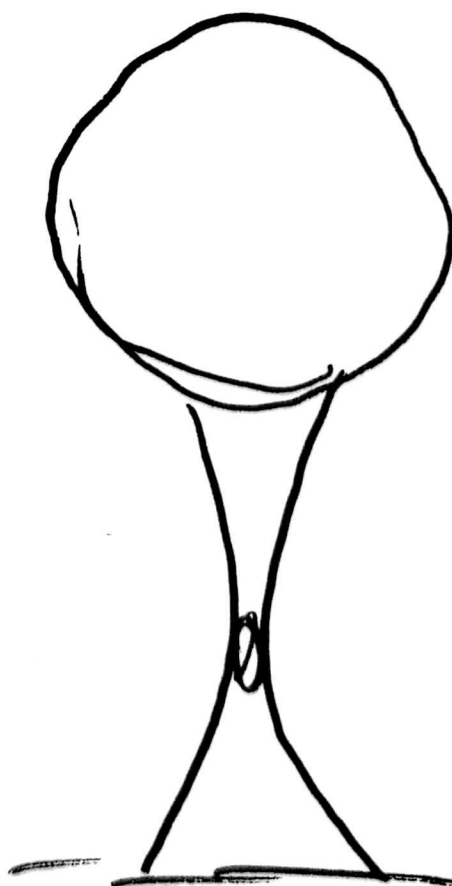


... my little sister...

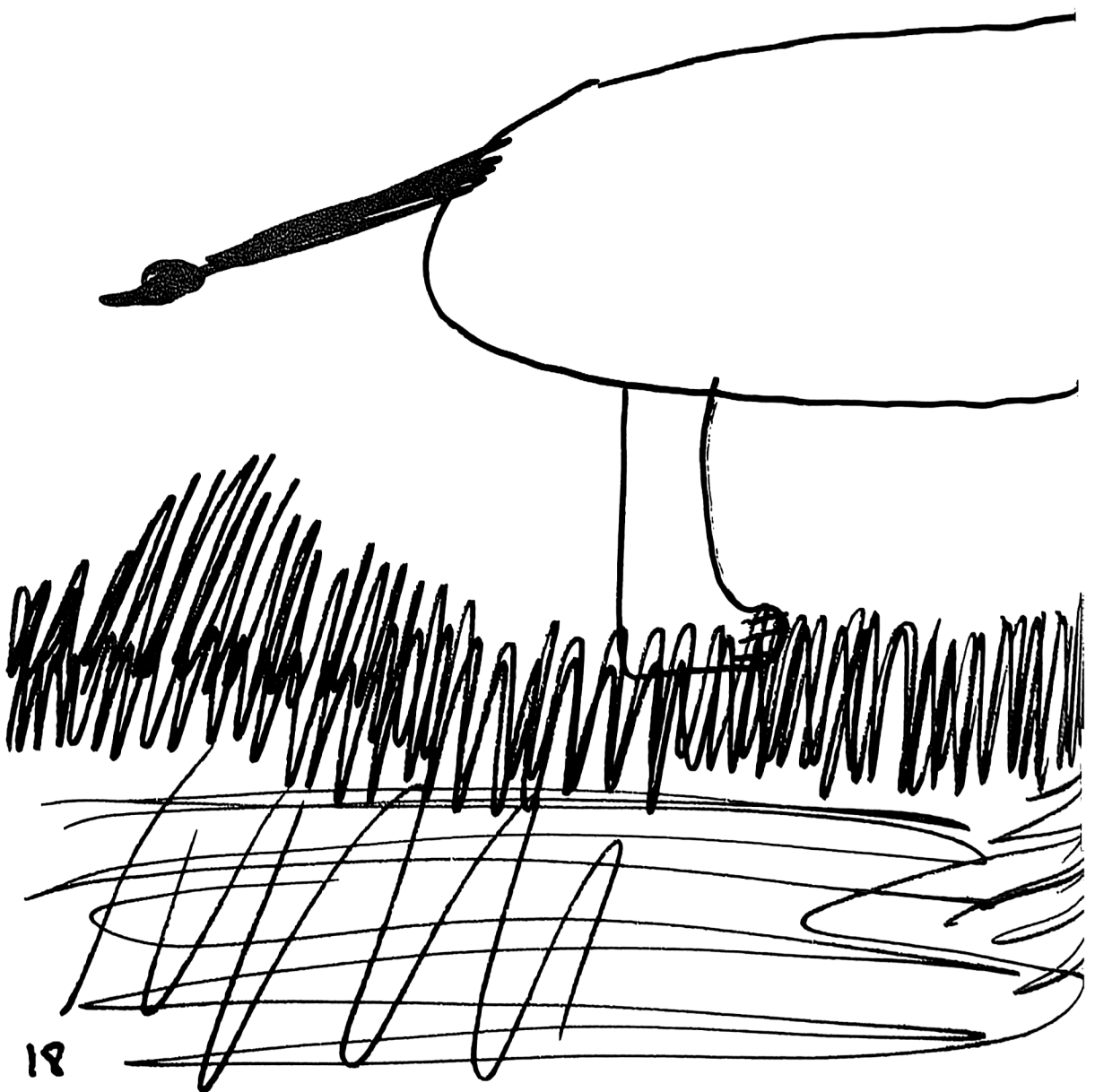


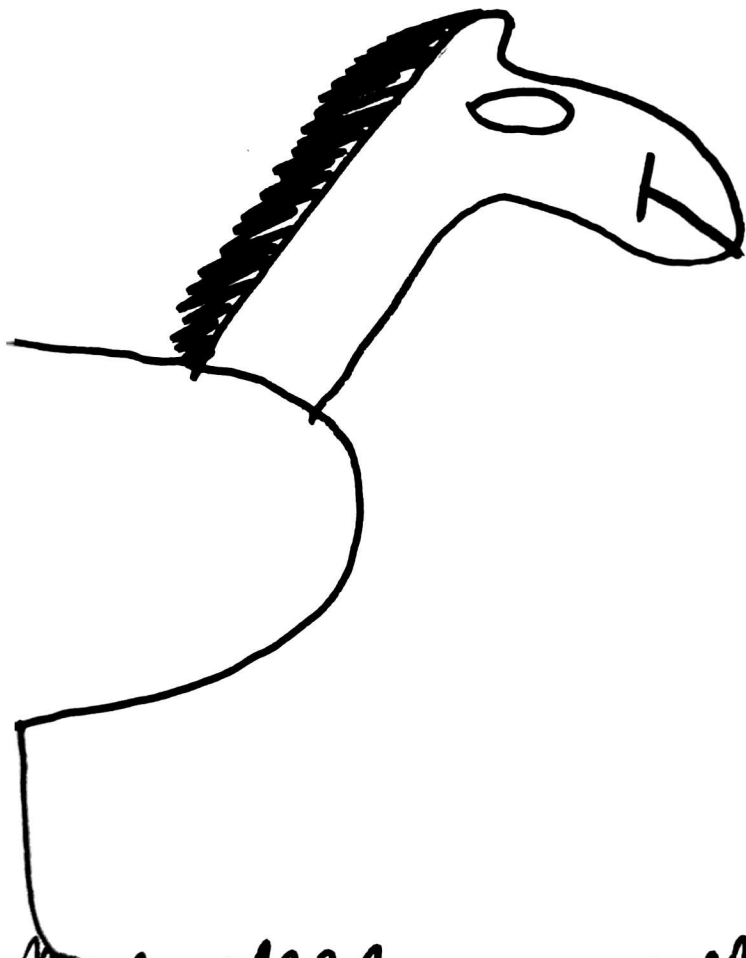
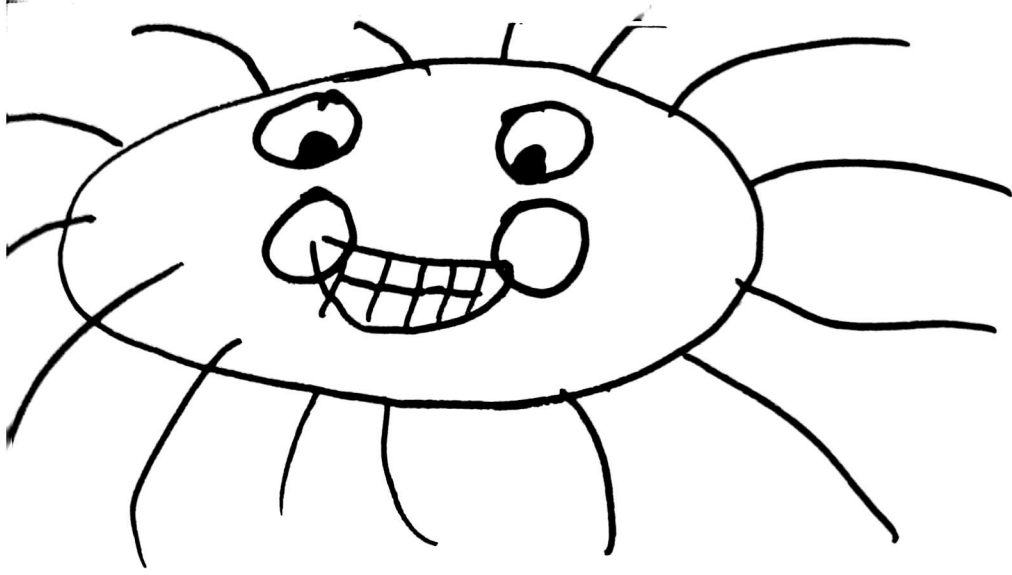
... my mother,
because God is
so nice to me...

God



... or maybe God
just looks like
a horse!





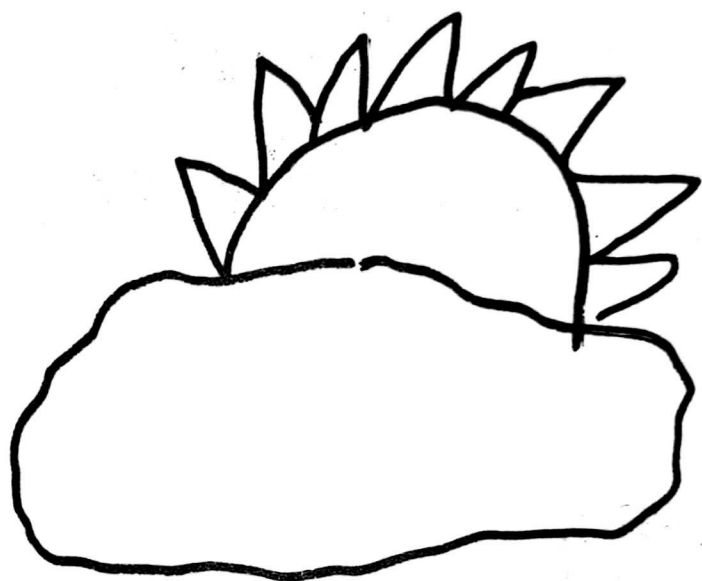
2.

Where Does God
Live?

God lives:

on a cloud,
way up in the sky...





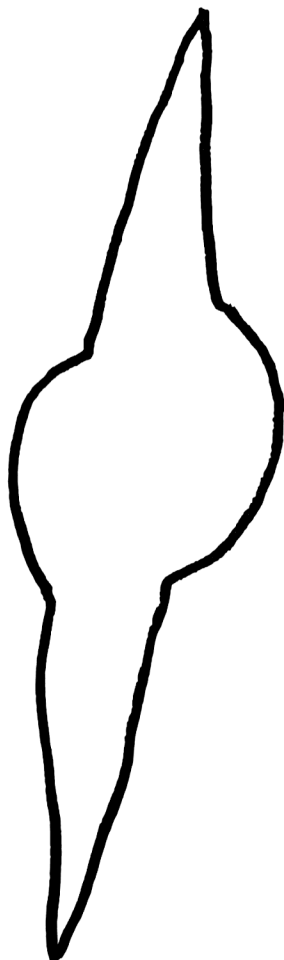
... on e
everyth
a long,





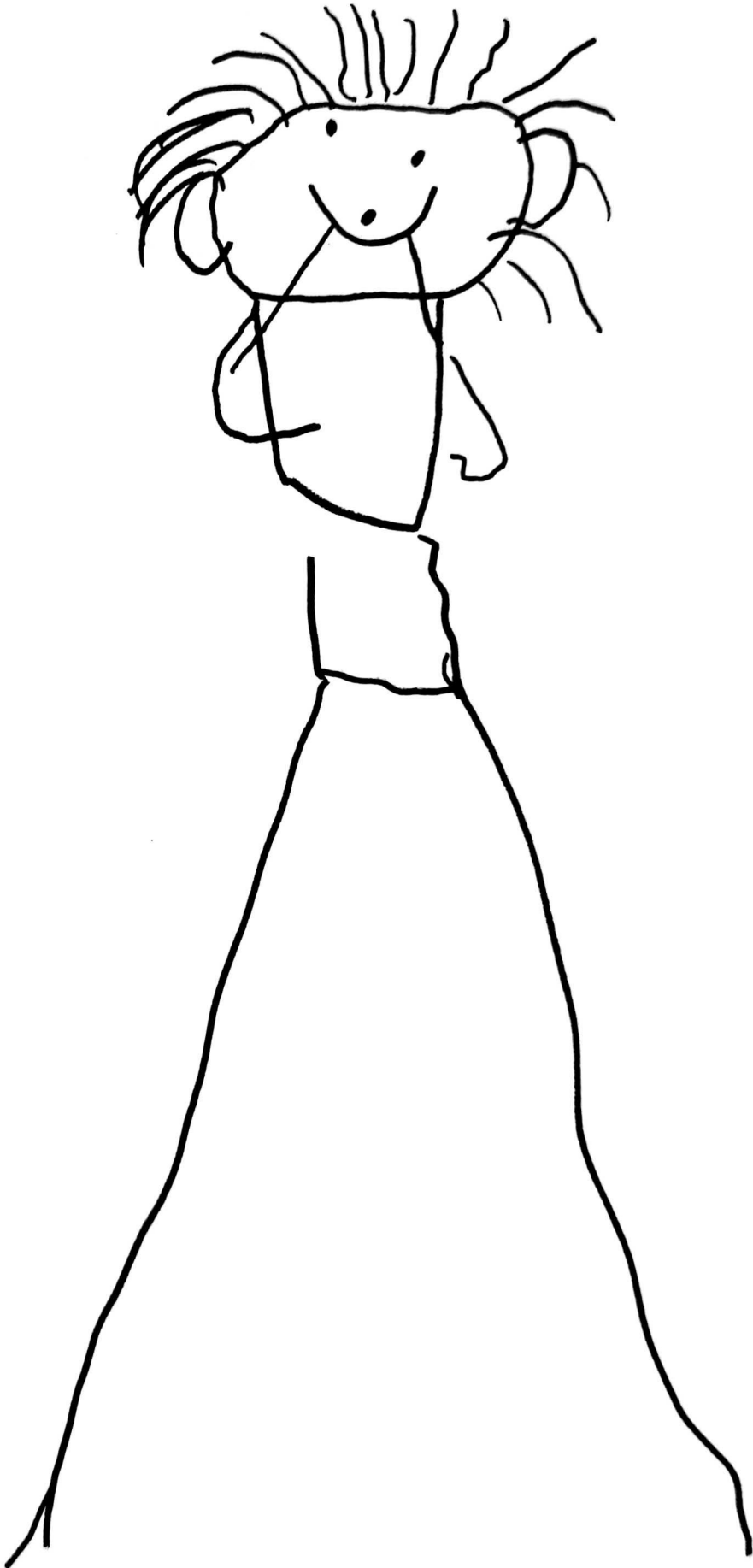
h with
he made
g time ago...

... with his son
out among the
galaxies, way out
in space...





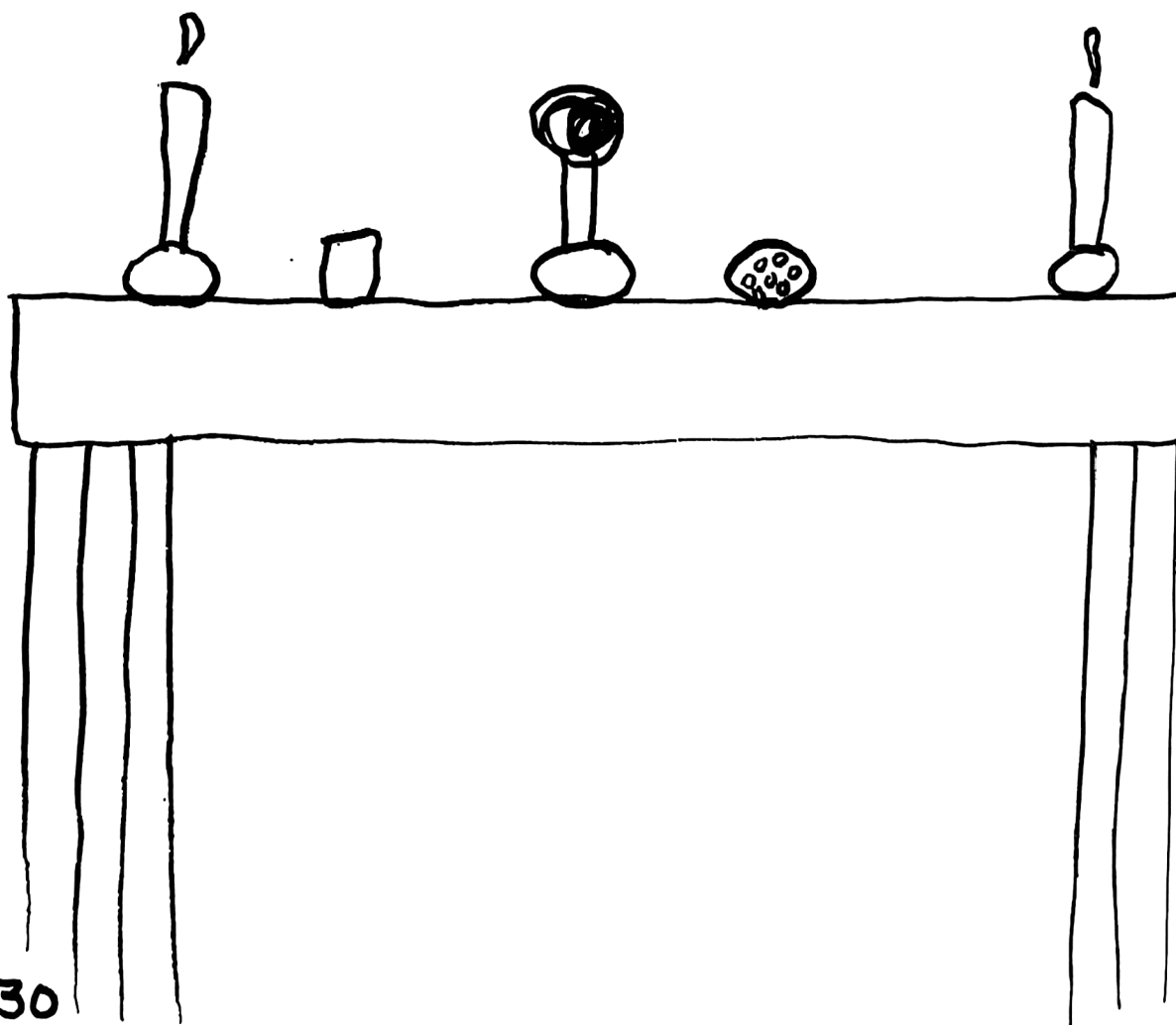
... on top of a
big mountain...





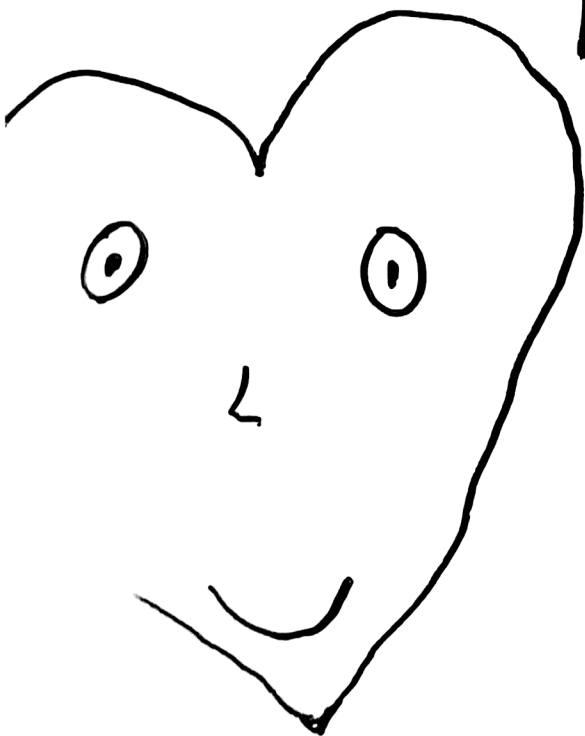
out among the
stars...

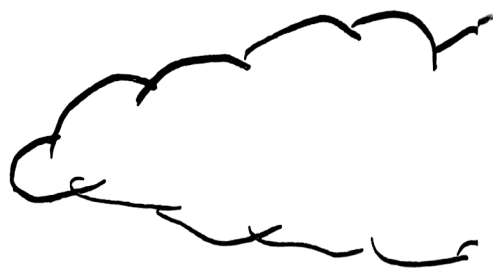
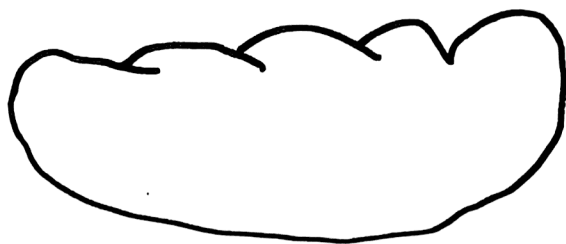
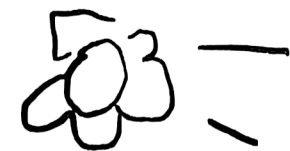
... in the
Sacraments...



... in my heart...

God is in your
Heart if you love
him.

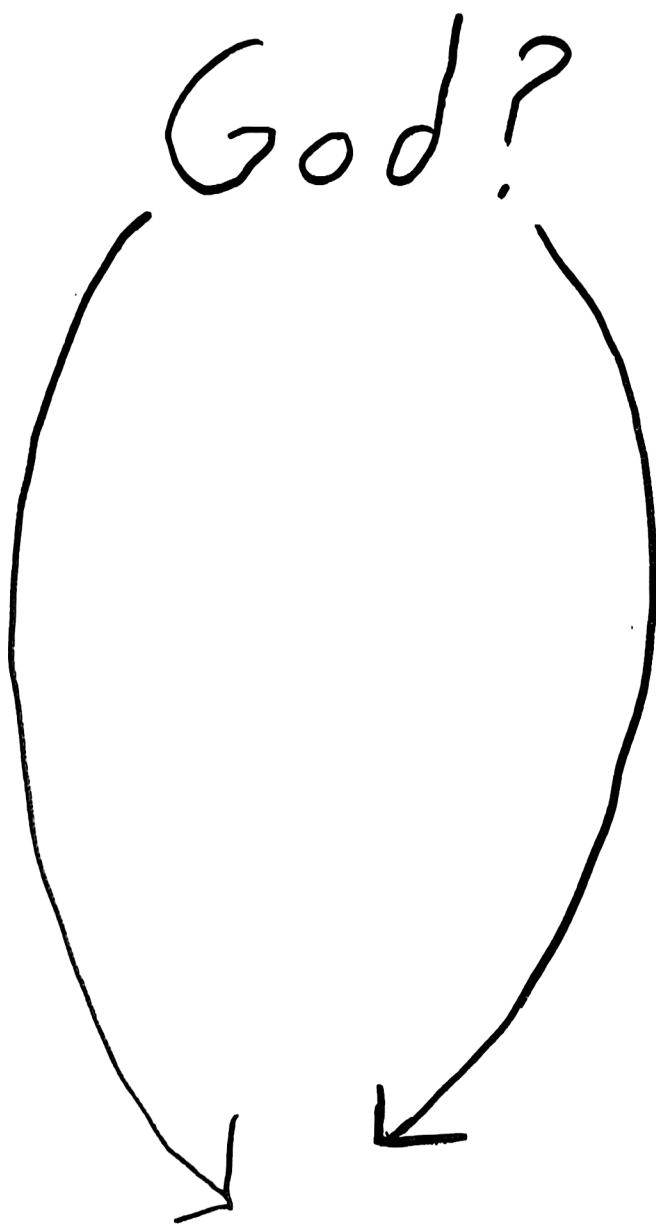




G-d (Heaven)
↑

... in a place
called heaven...

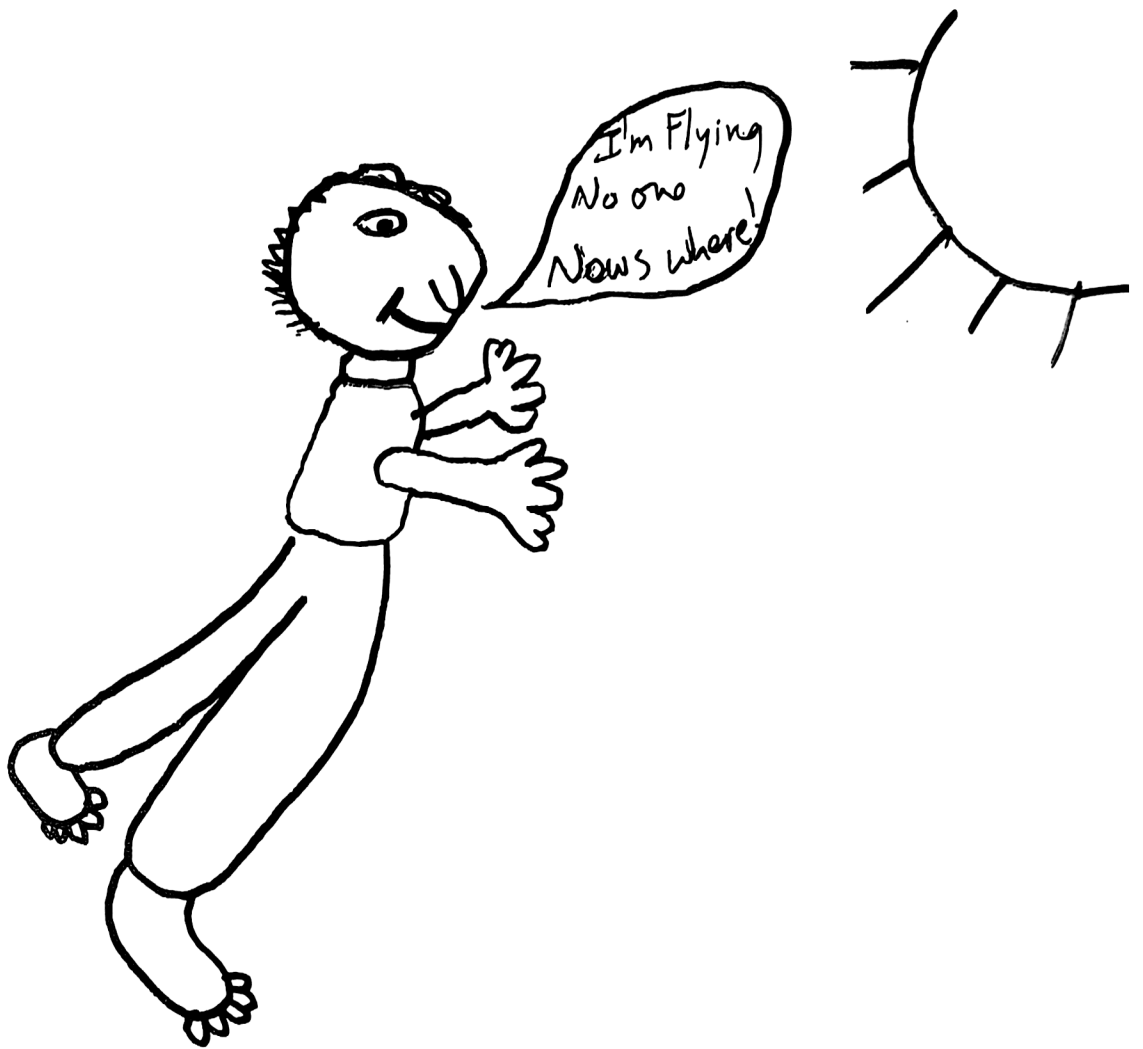
.. in between
everything else...





... everywhere !! ...

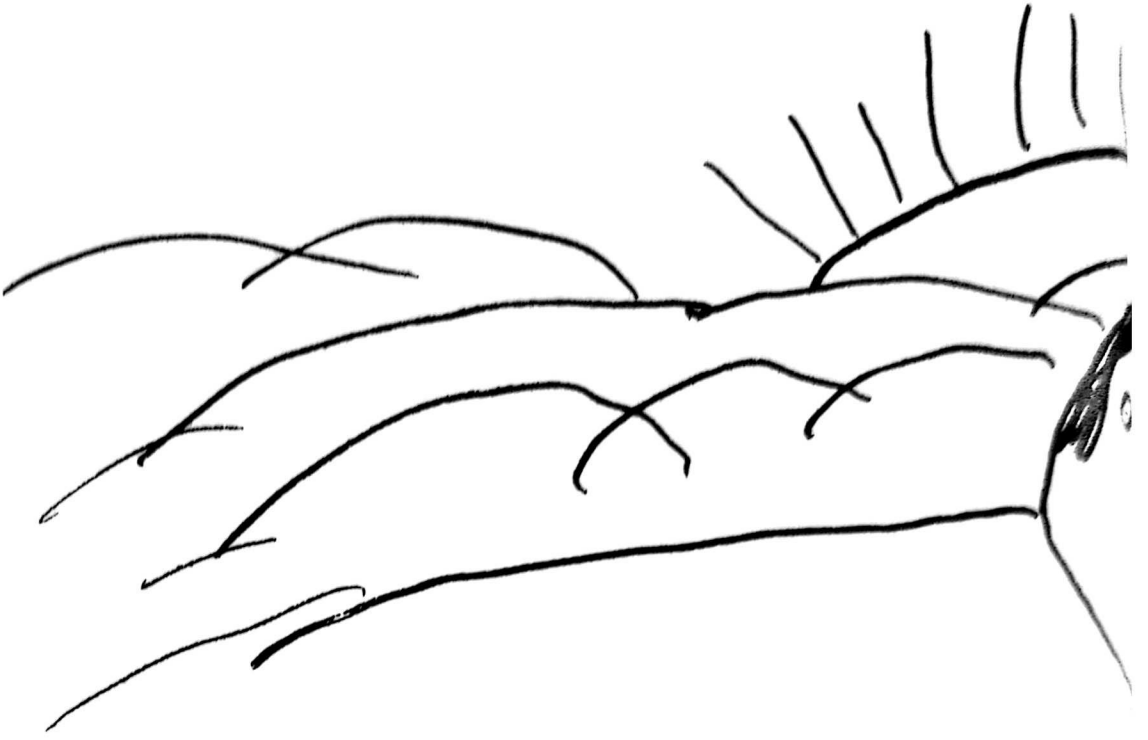




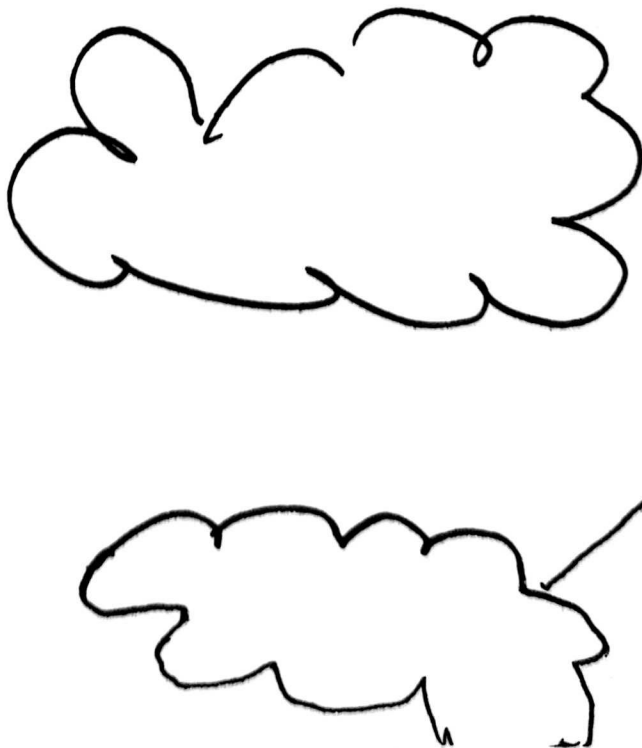
... or maybe
no one even
knows where !

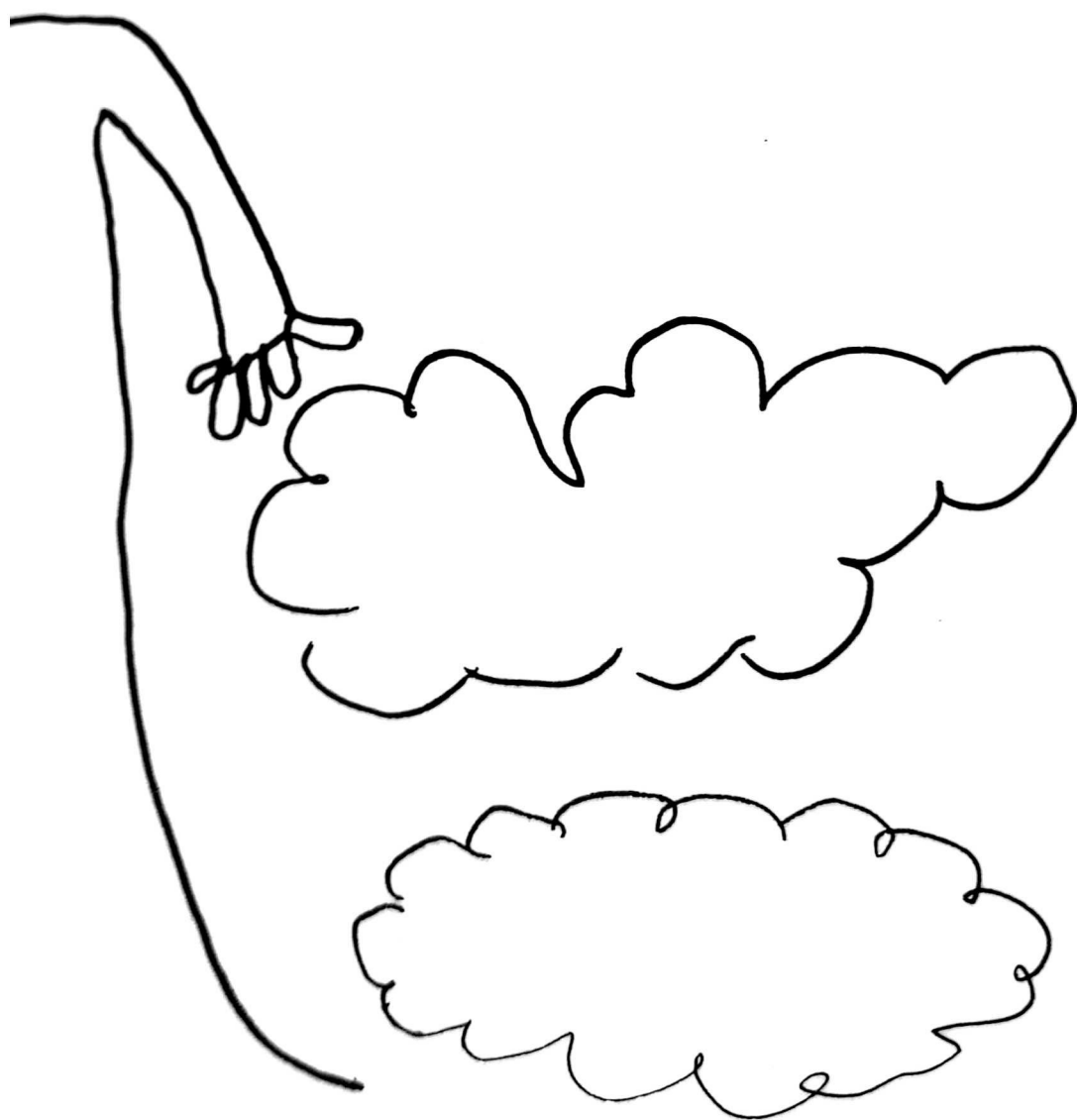
3.

What Does God
Do all Day Long?

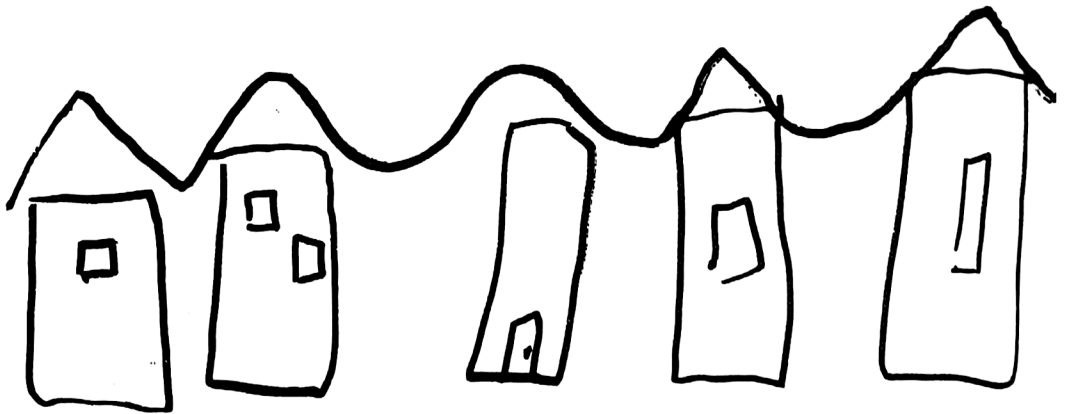
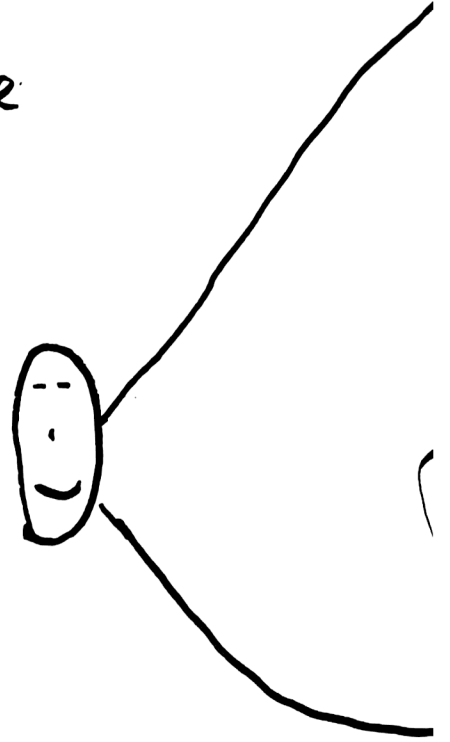


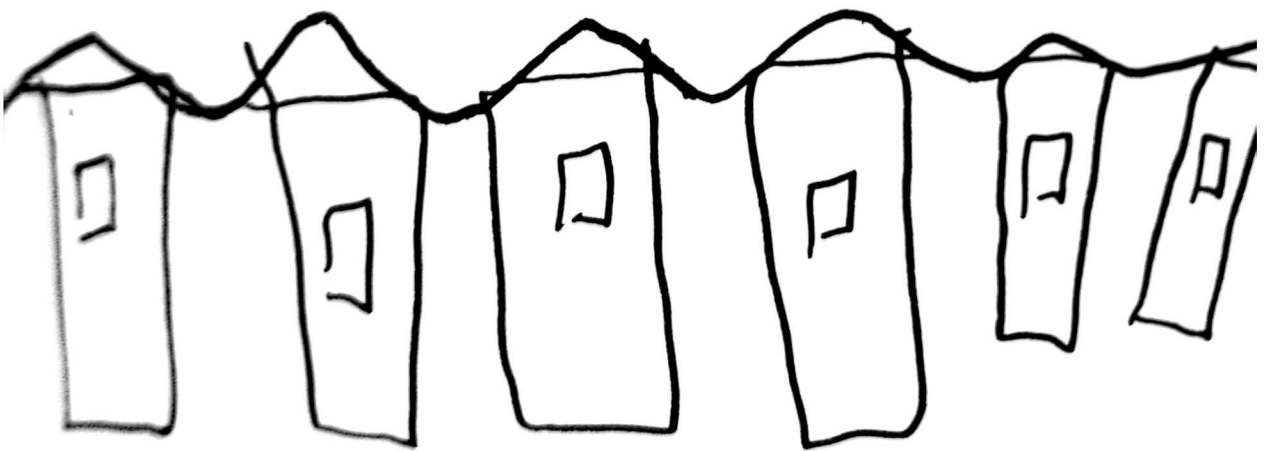
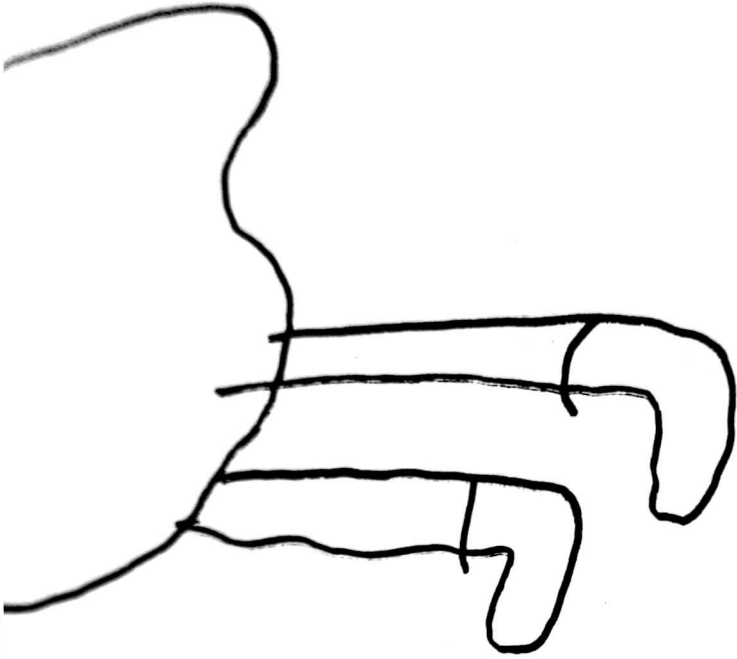
4:54 A.M. - God
gets out of bed
and makes the
sun come up!





After the sun comes
up, God flies over
all of our houses
to make sure
we all get
up on time!

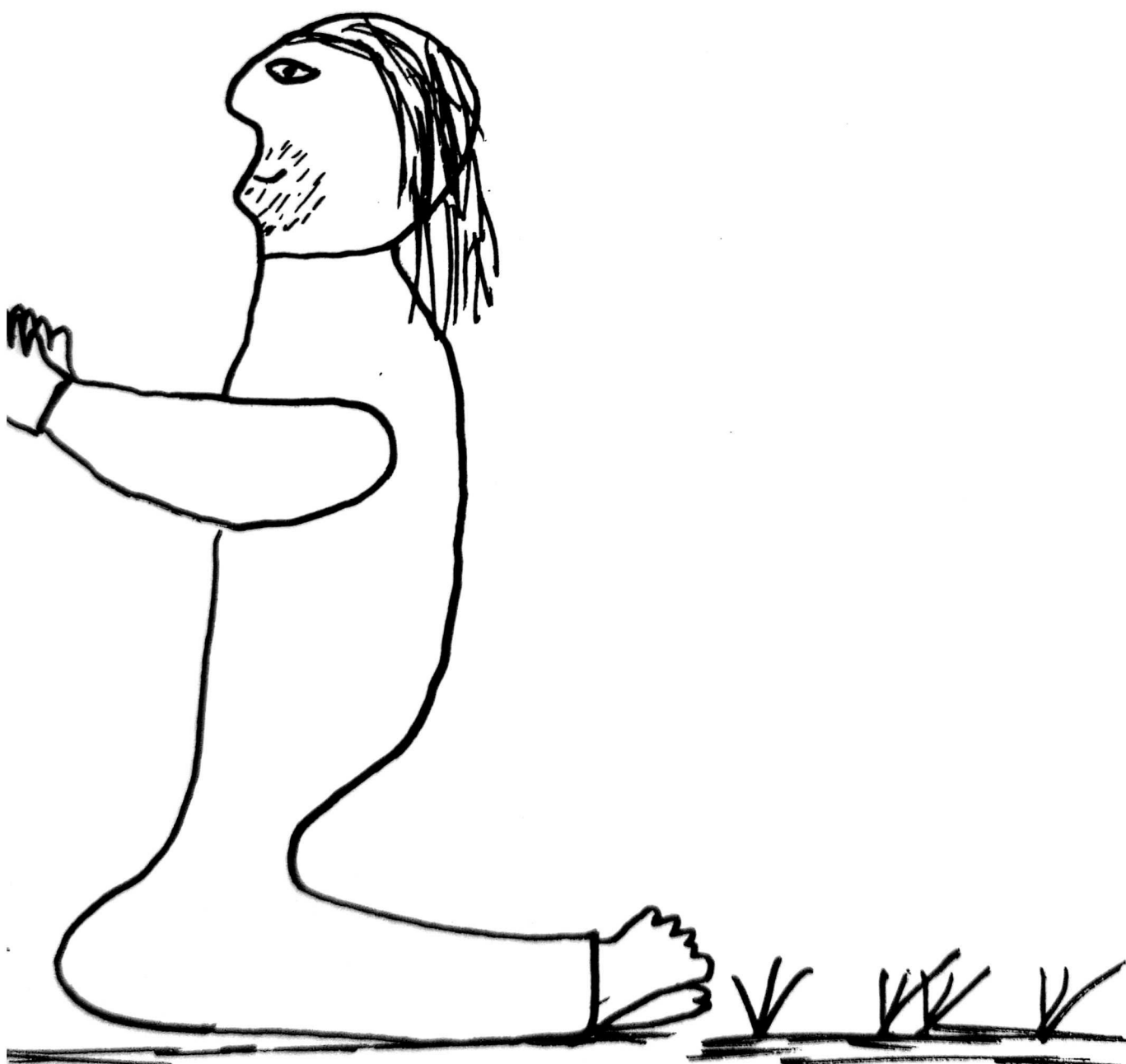




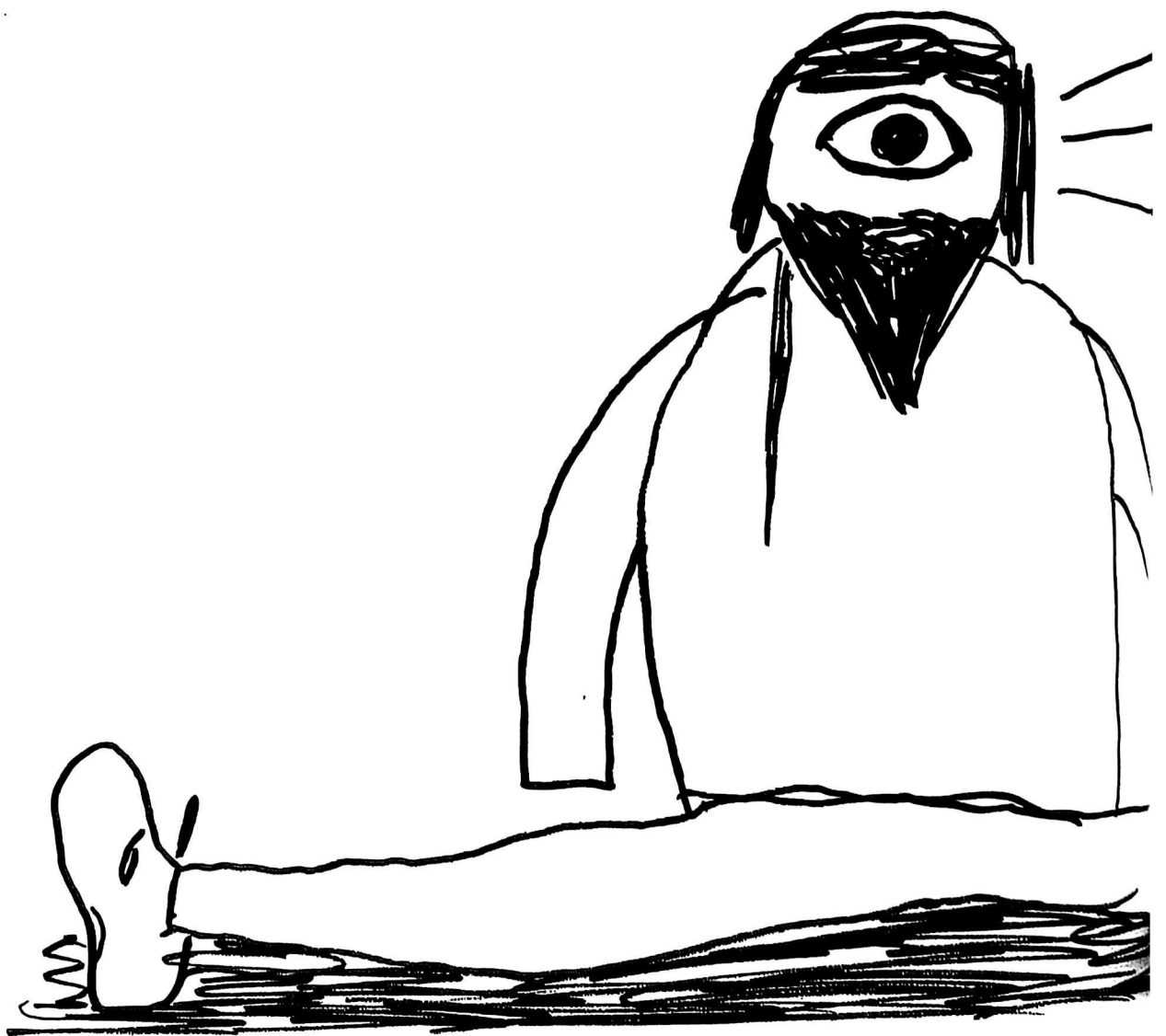
Before he shaves in the
God kneels down in
and prays for all



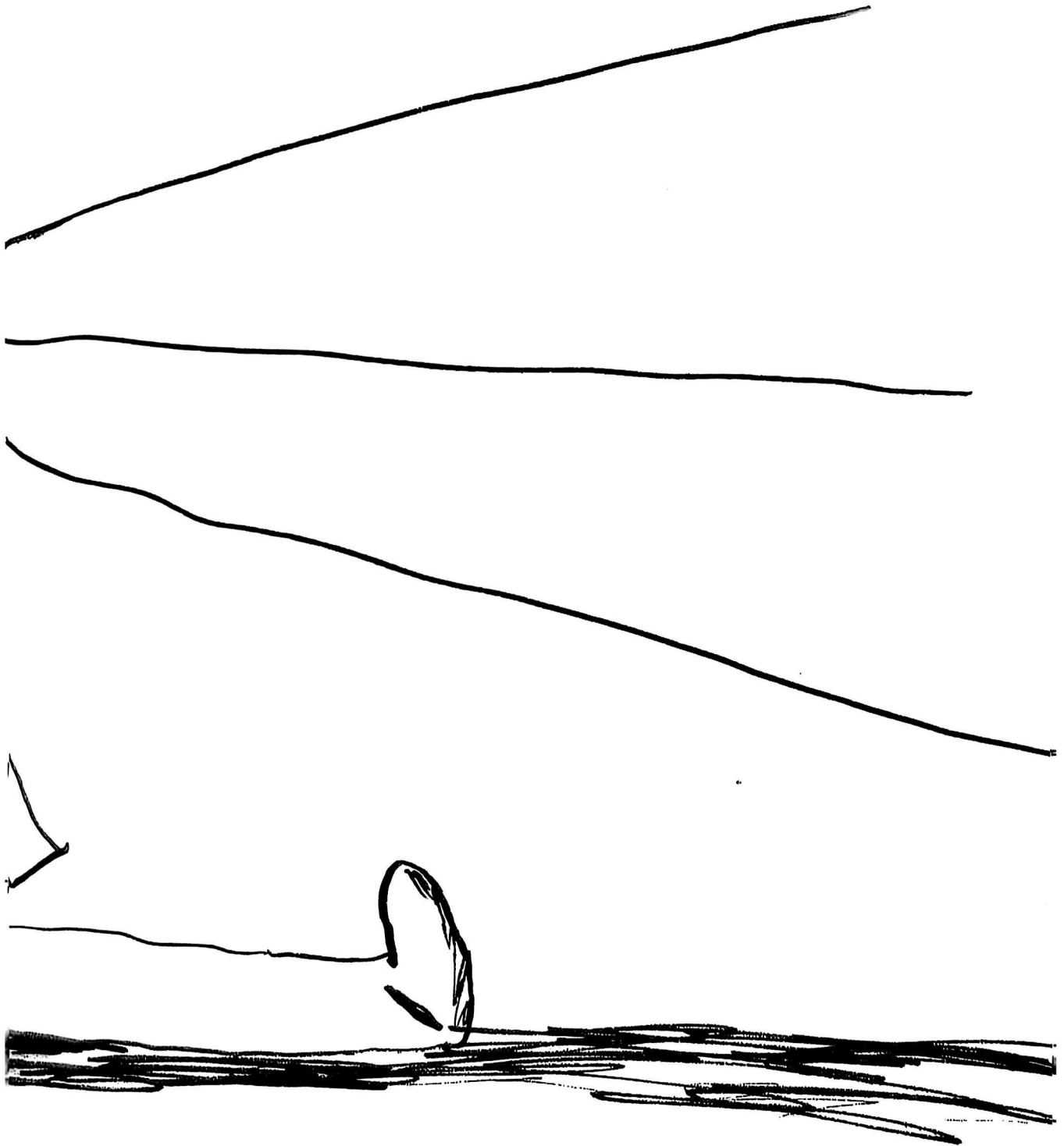
morning,
as garden
is people!

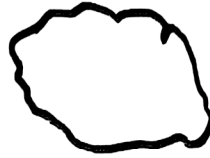
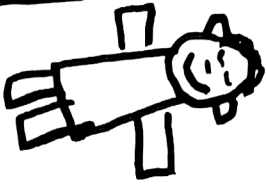


During the rest of the
does lots of good
God watches us..



lay, God
things:

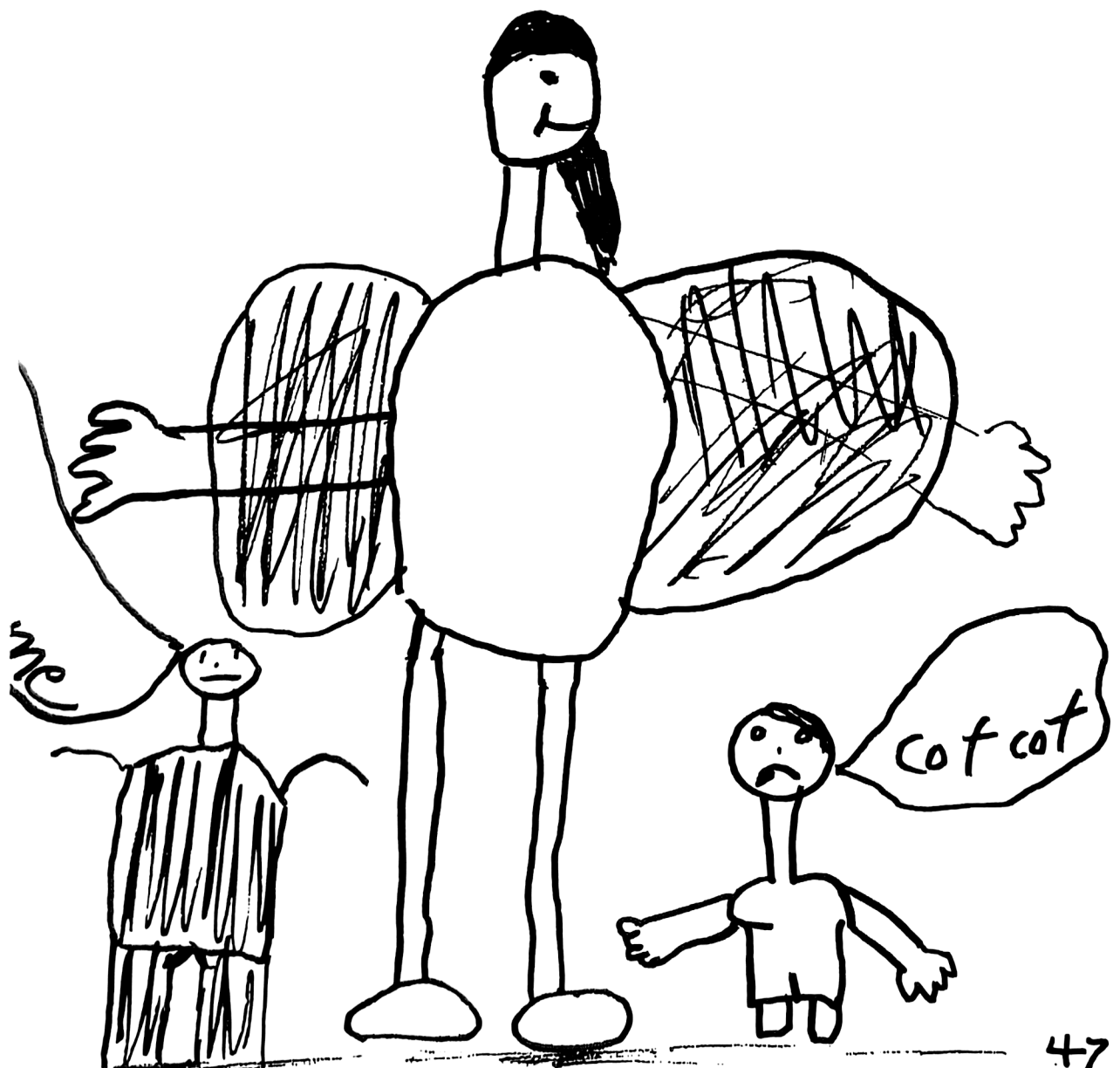


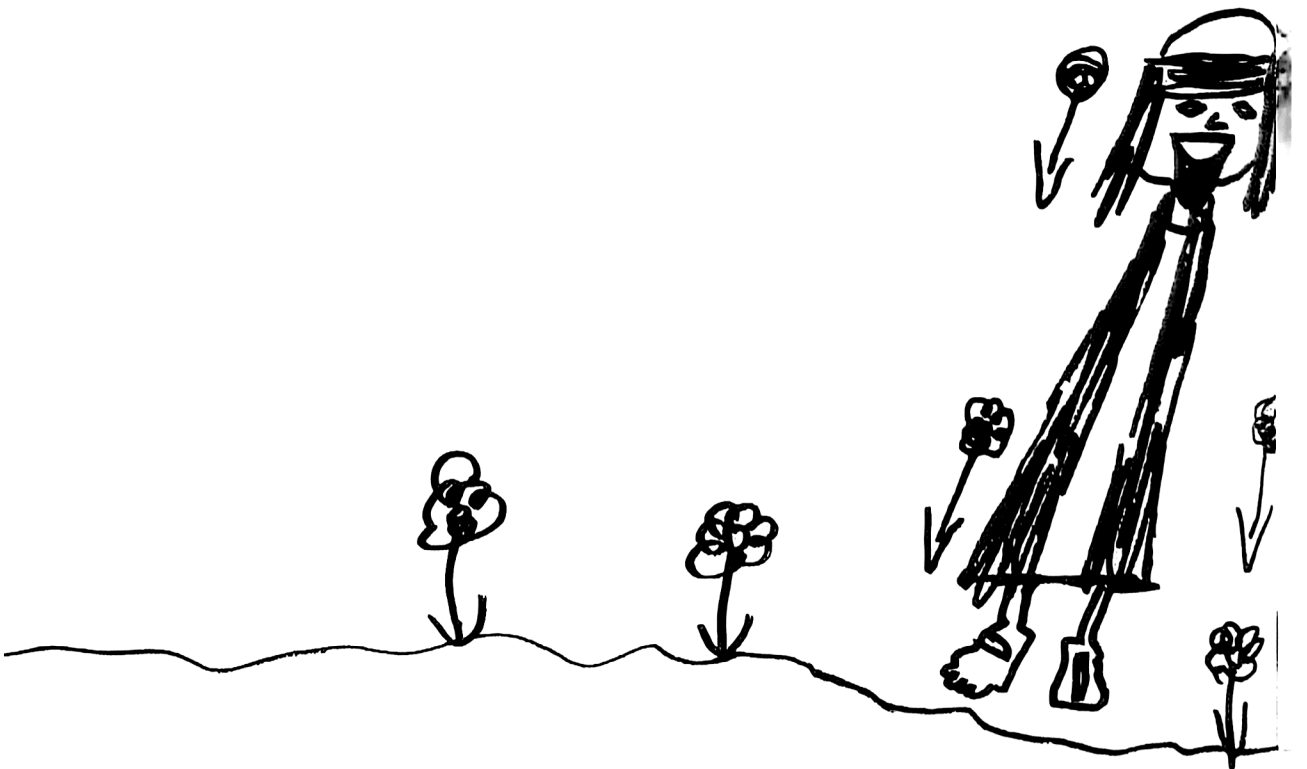
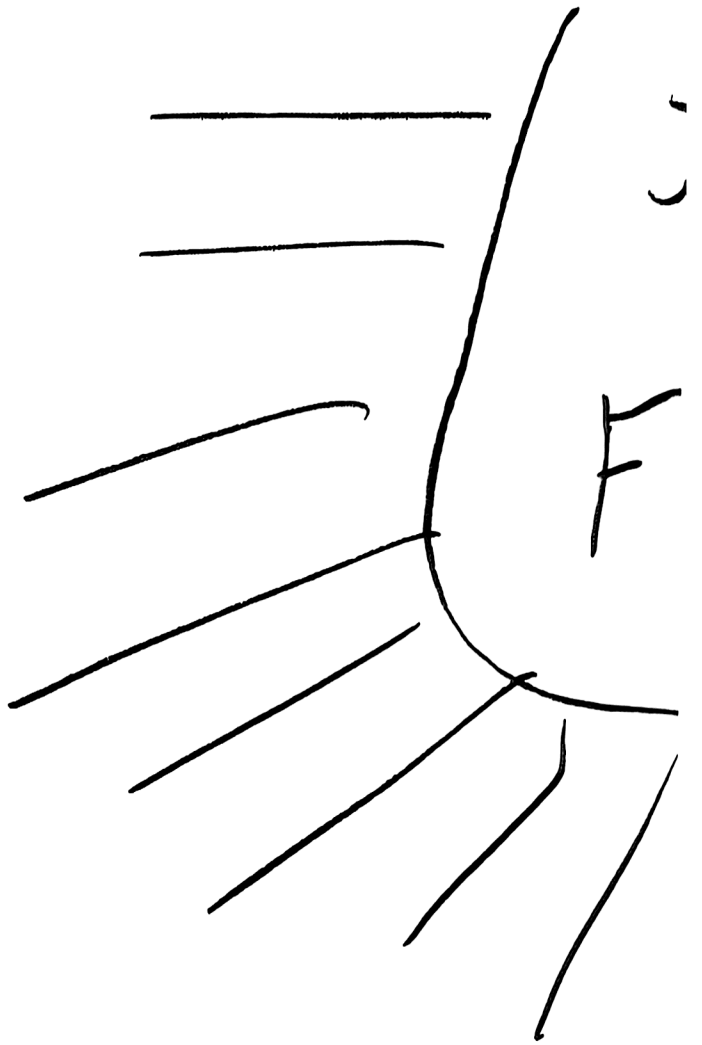


... God watches over
all the little animals.

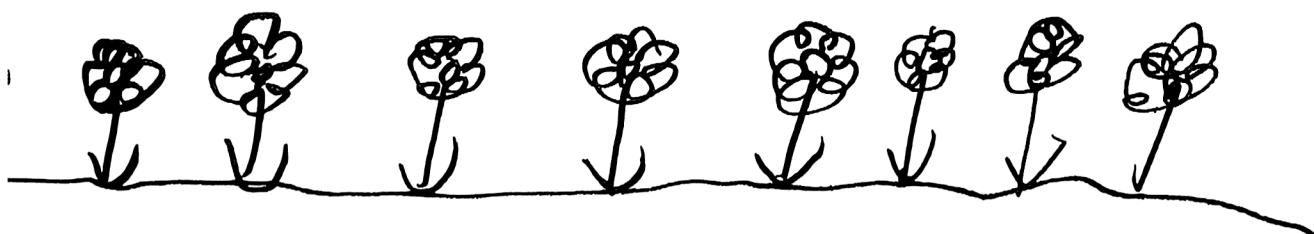
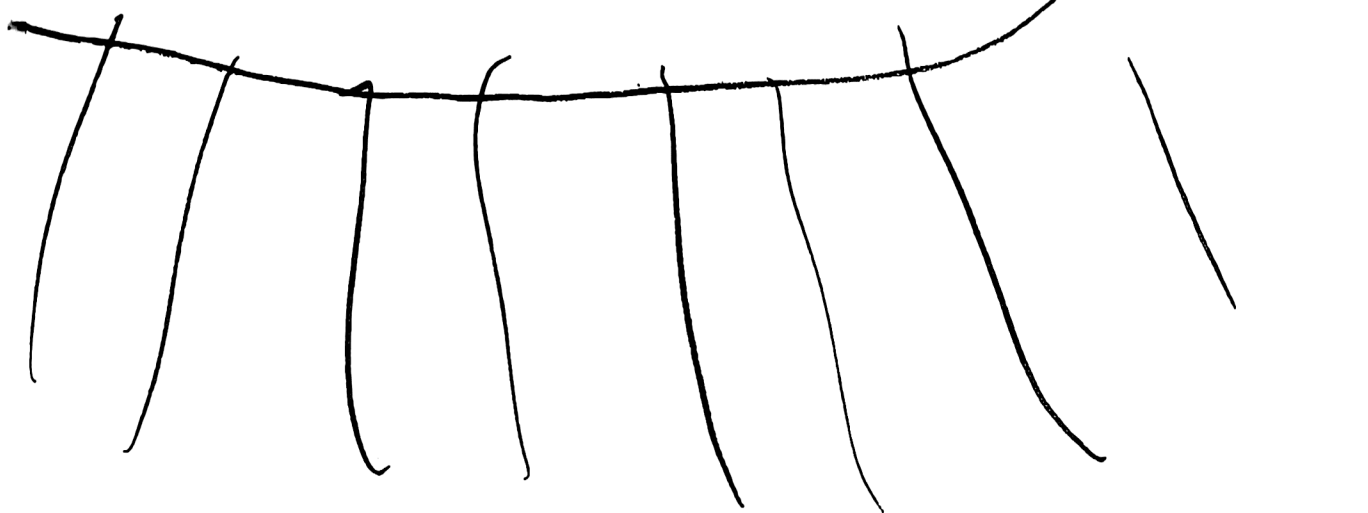


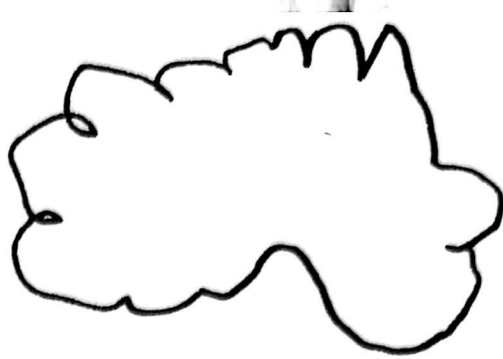
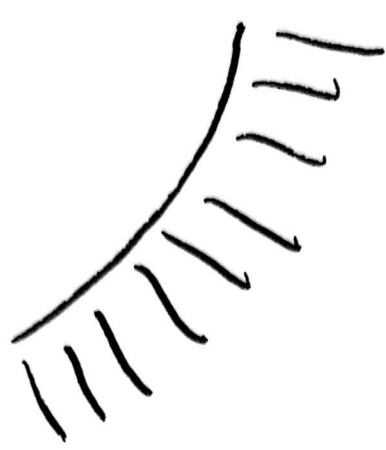
... God makes sick
people feel better ...



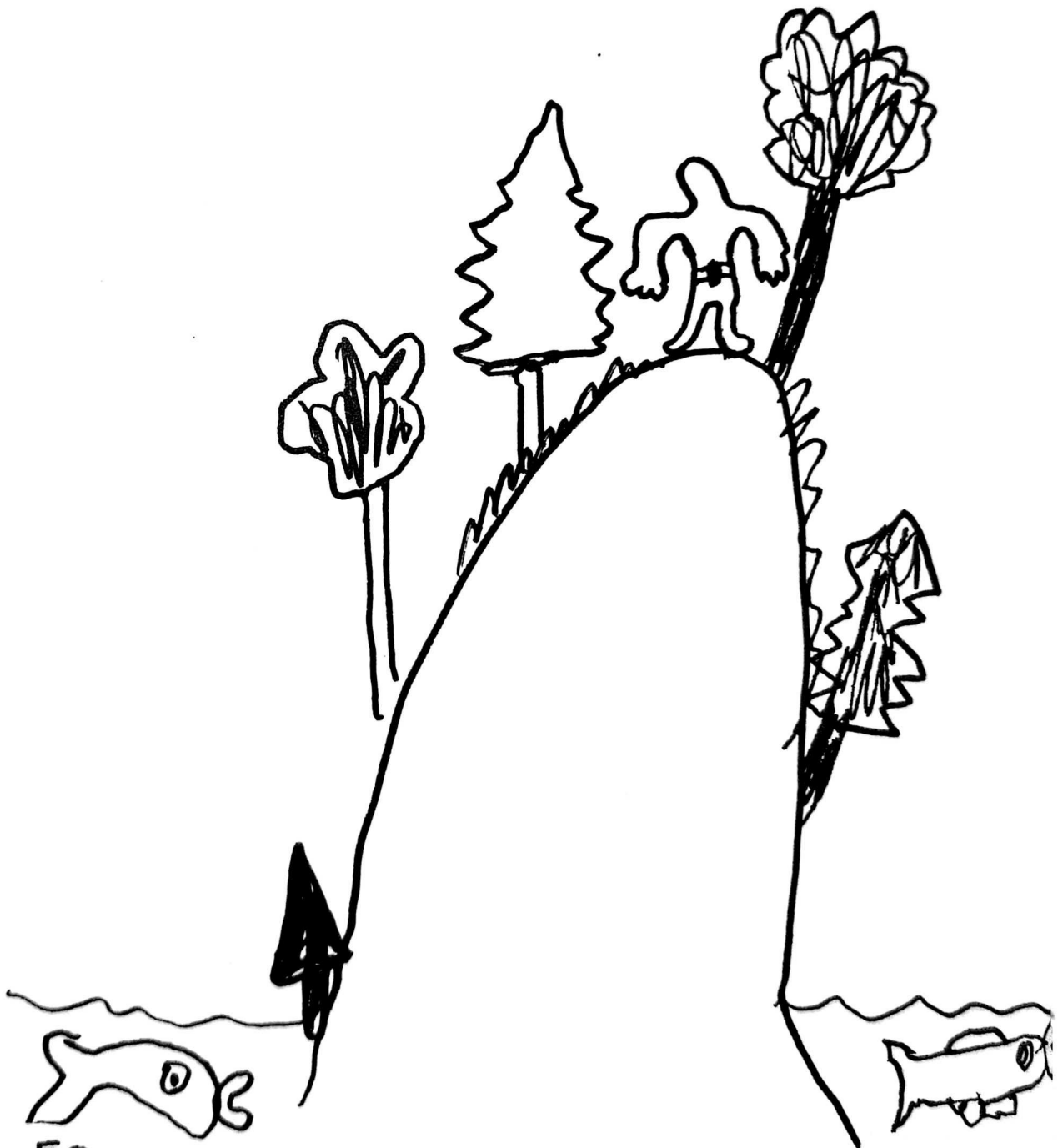


sun Makes The
Plants Grow



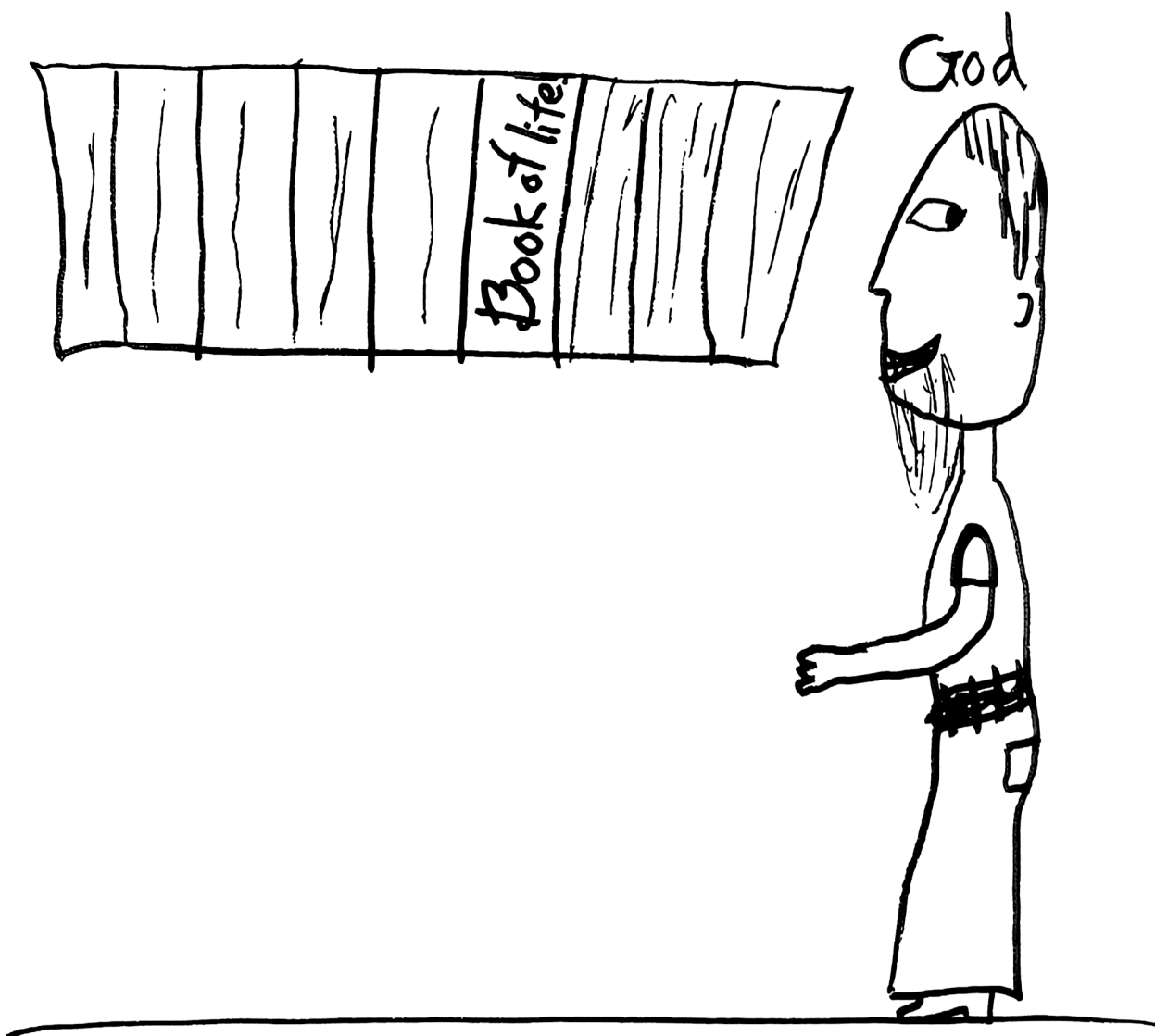


... climbs big
hills ...



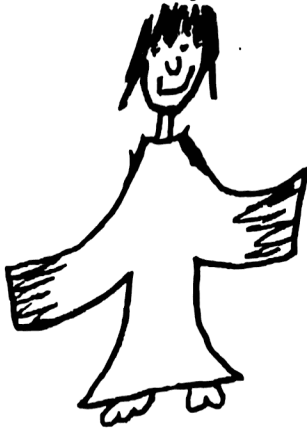
... he tends his
Sheep....



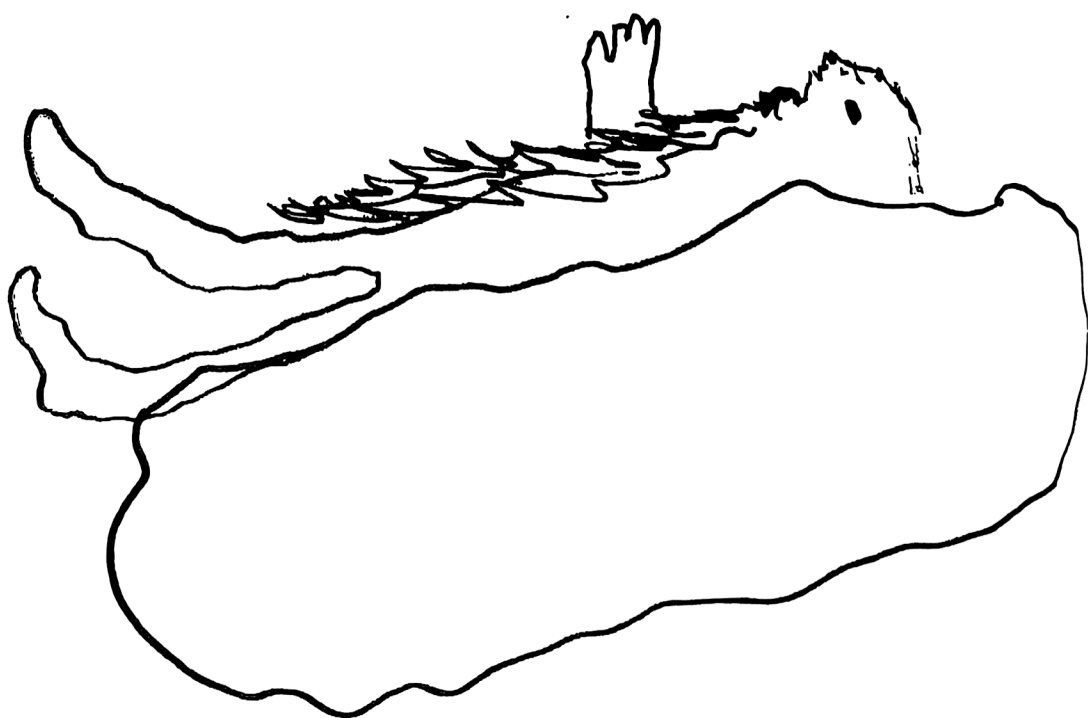


... writes the names of
people in the Book

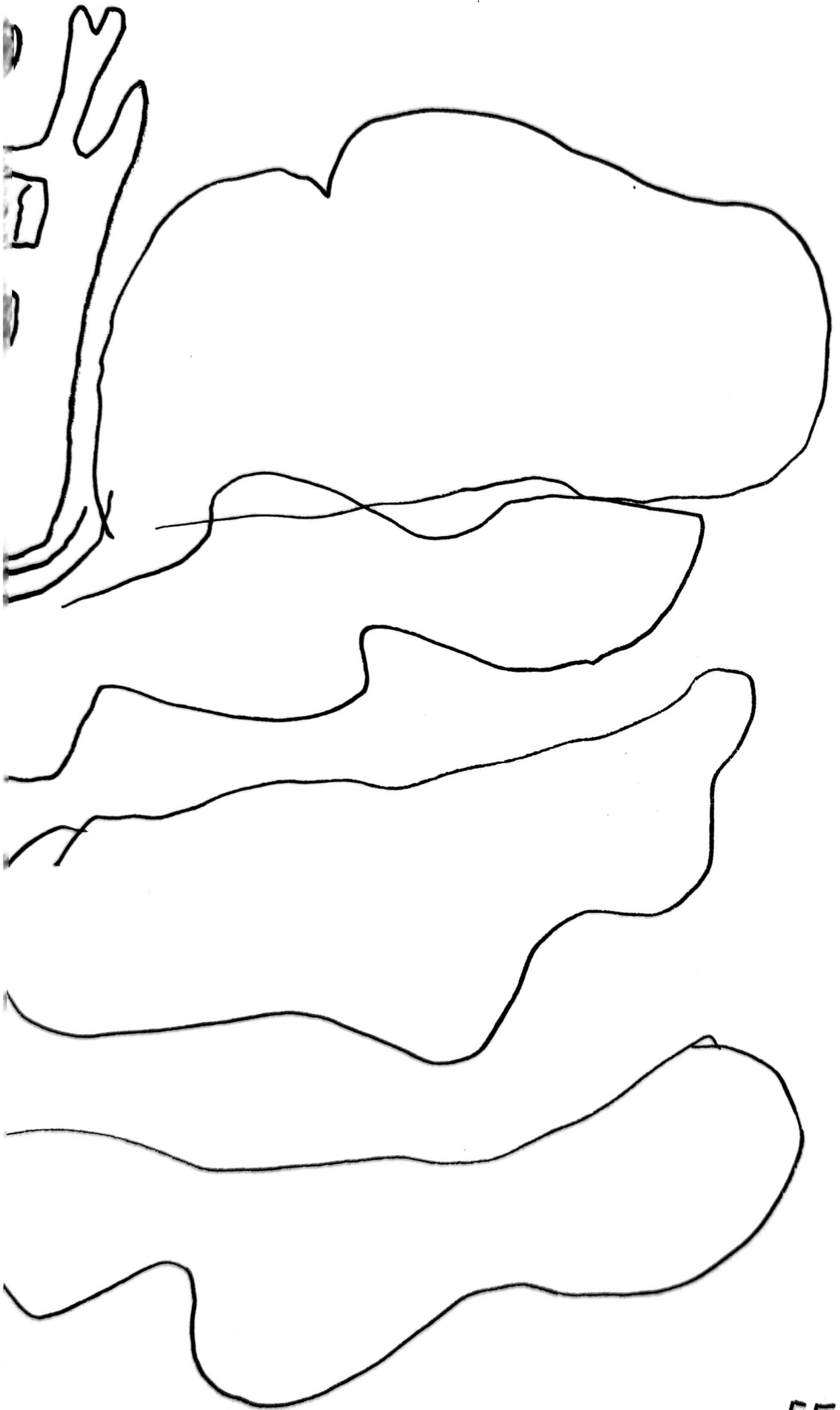
Angel

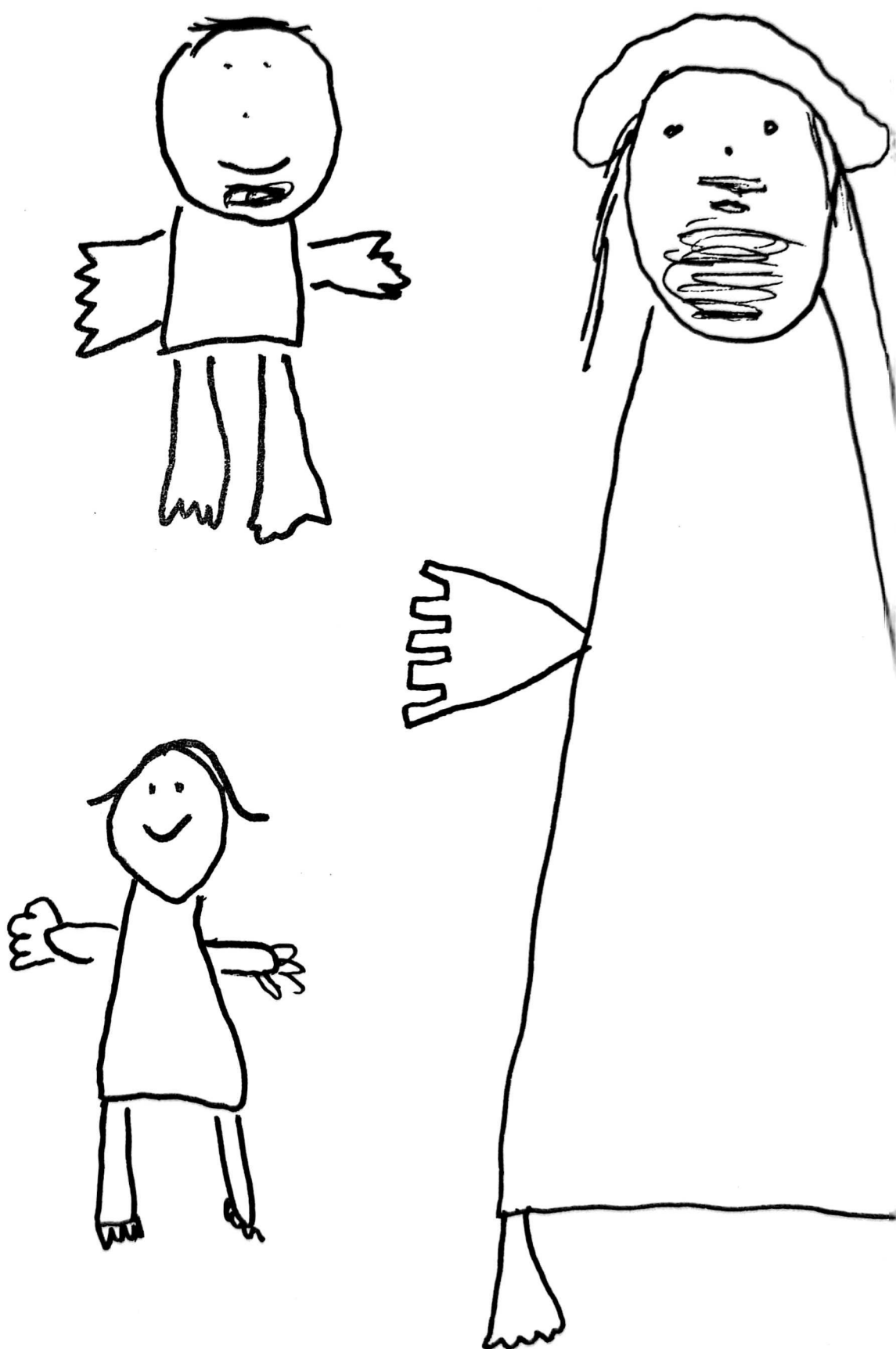


all the good
Life ---



... takes a sun bath...





... after dinner, God
goes for a walk
with his
wife &
kids...







... 8:42 P.M. - God
brings the moon
out and makes
the sun set!

4.

What Does
God Wear?

God wears lots of
different things,
and looks especially
good in verticle stripes...



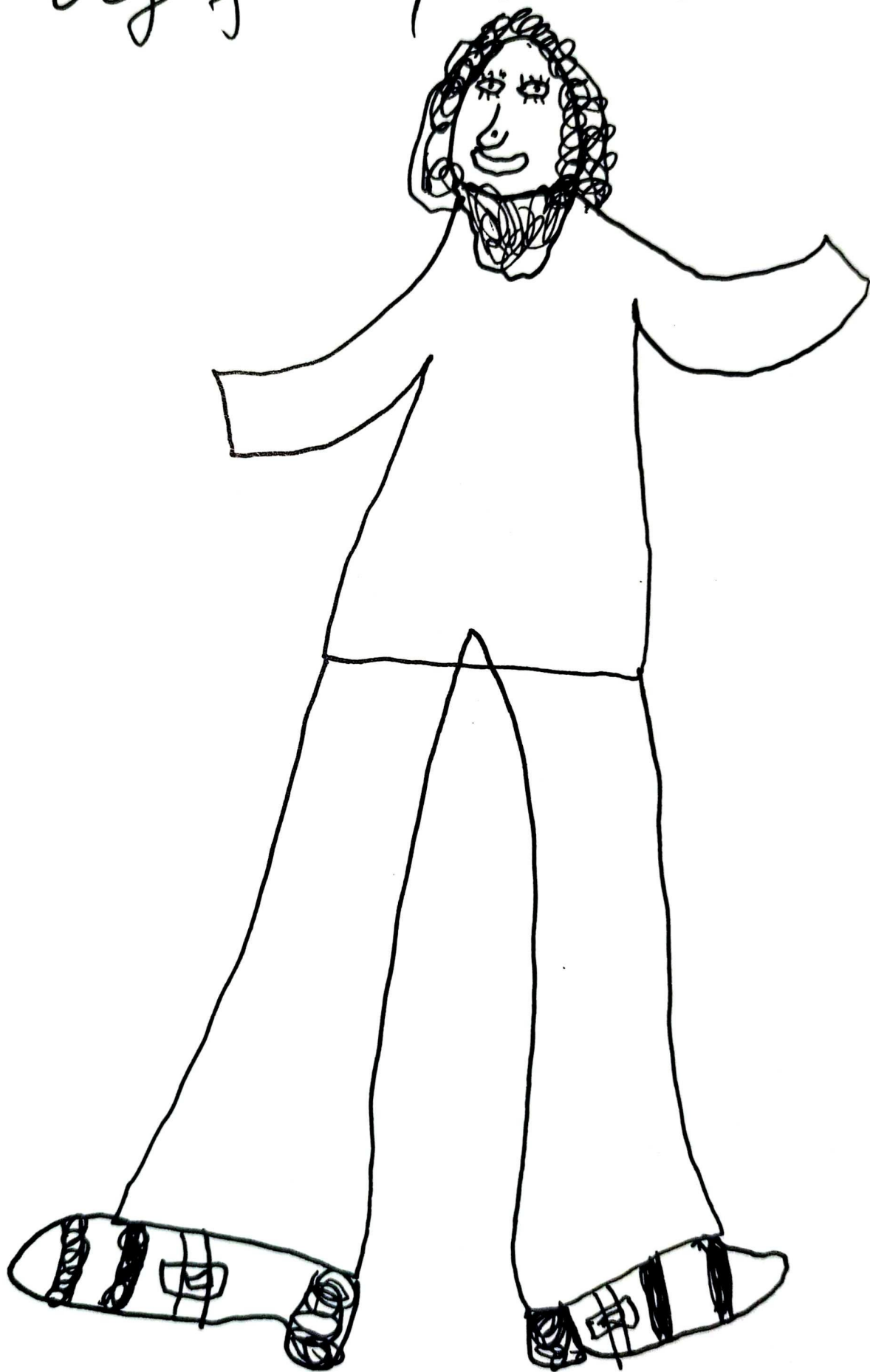


... diagonal stripes ...

... all kinds of stripes !



God sometimes wears,
big fancy shoes...!!



or sandals ...



... but most of the time
he just paints his
toenails!



God can wear
clothes fit
for a king...

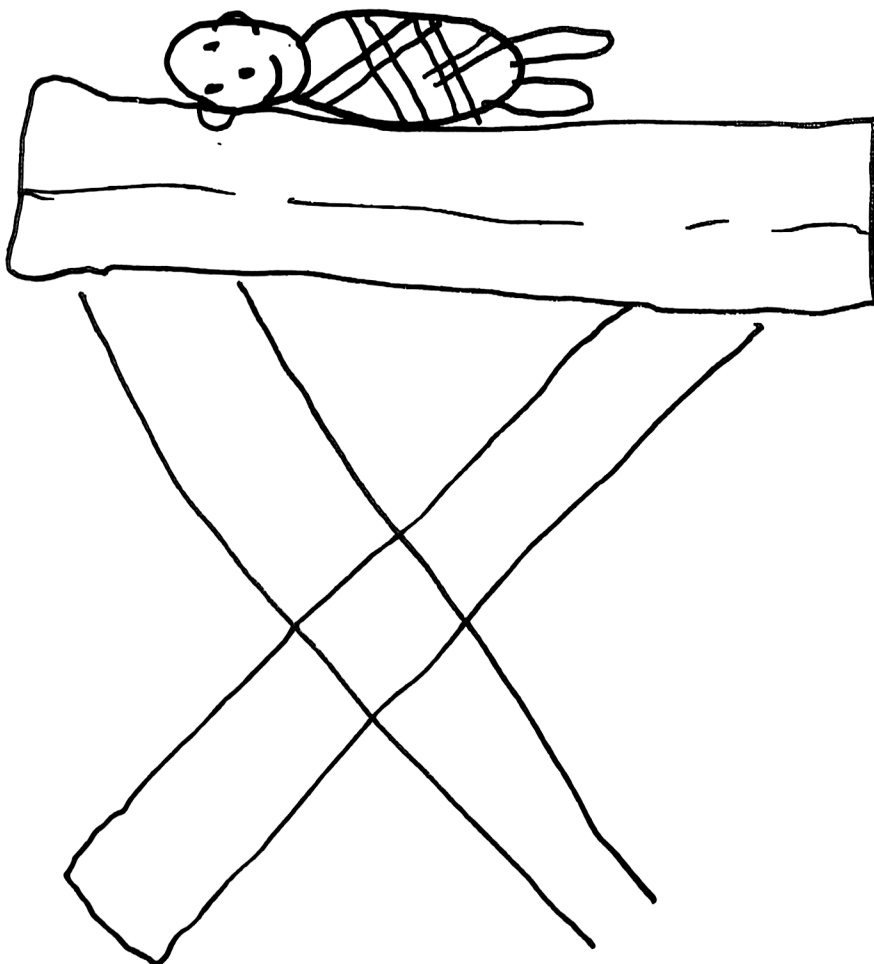


... or can
dress just
like us!

god

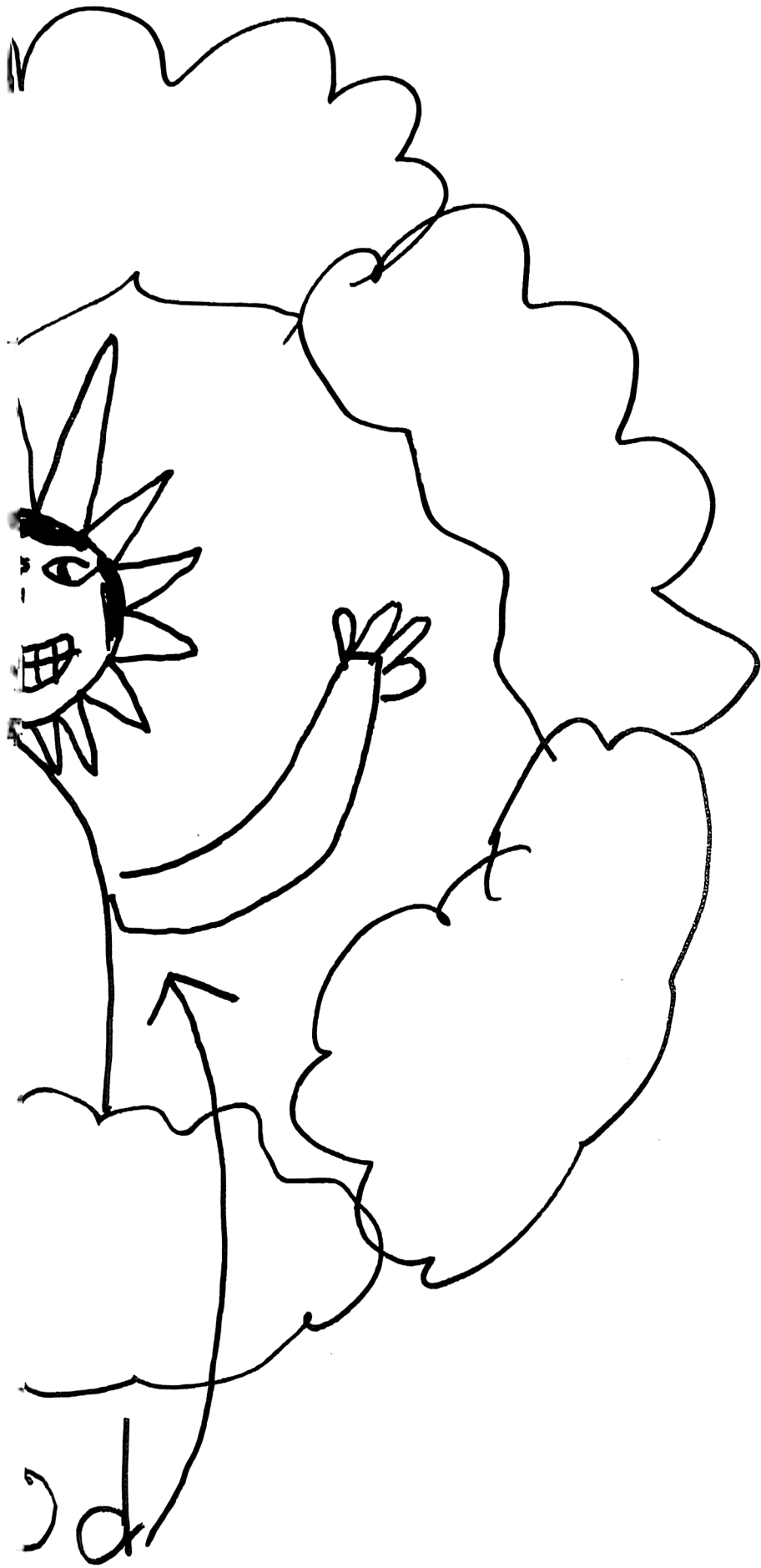


God can wear
swaddling clothes...





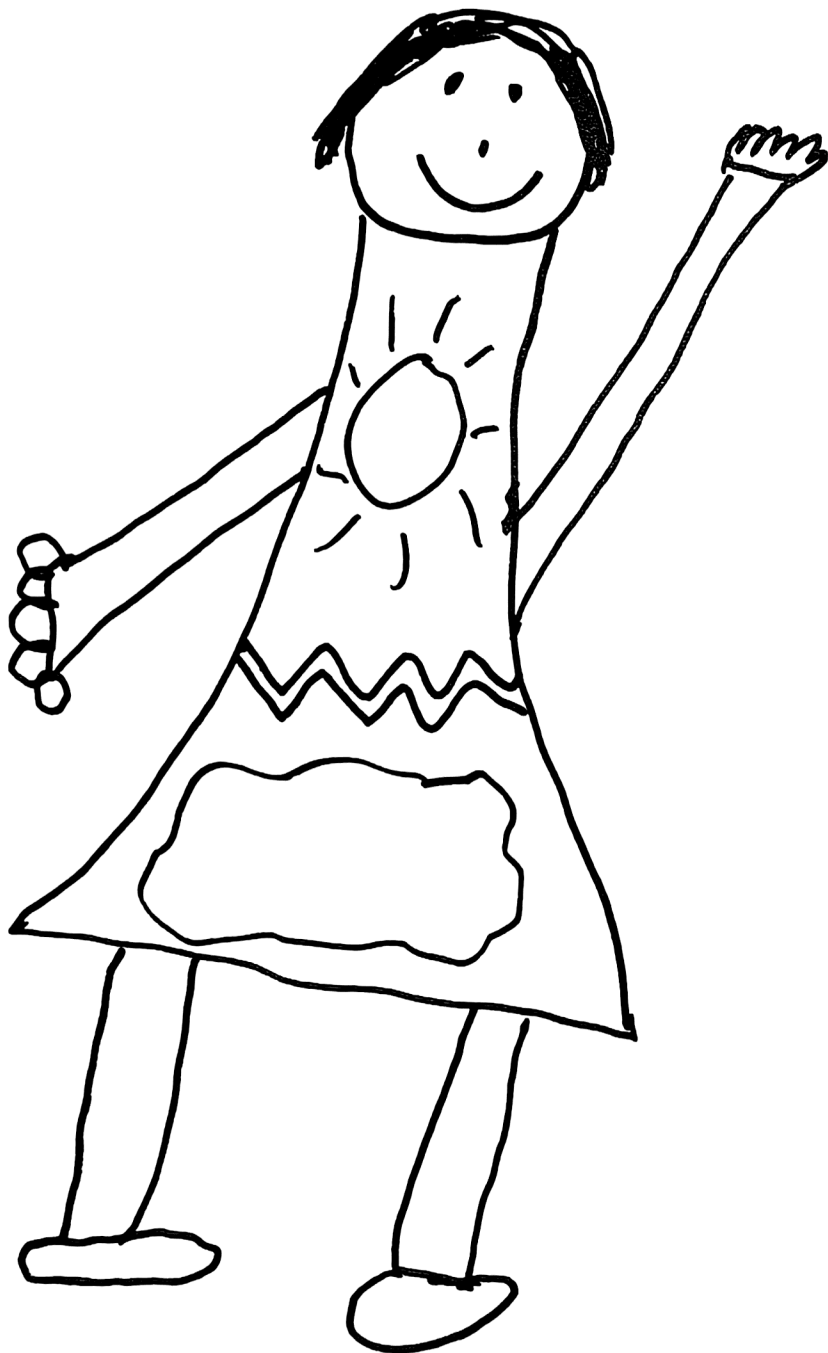
...or a shirt &
a tie!



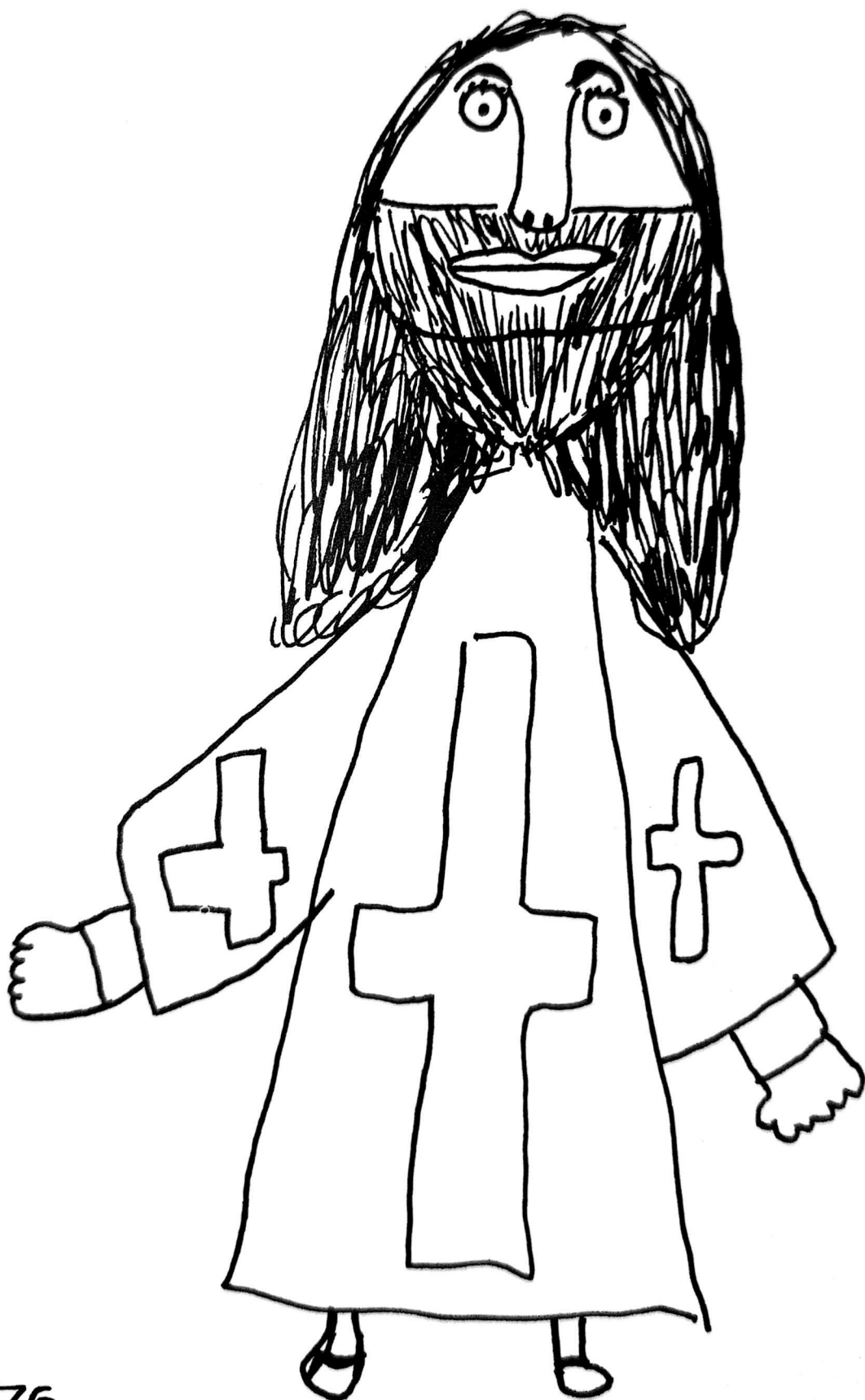
God can dress like
an angel...



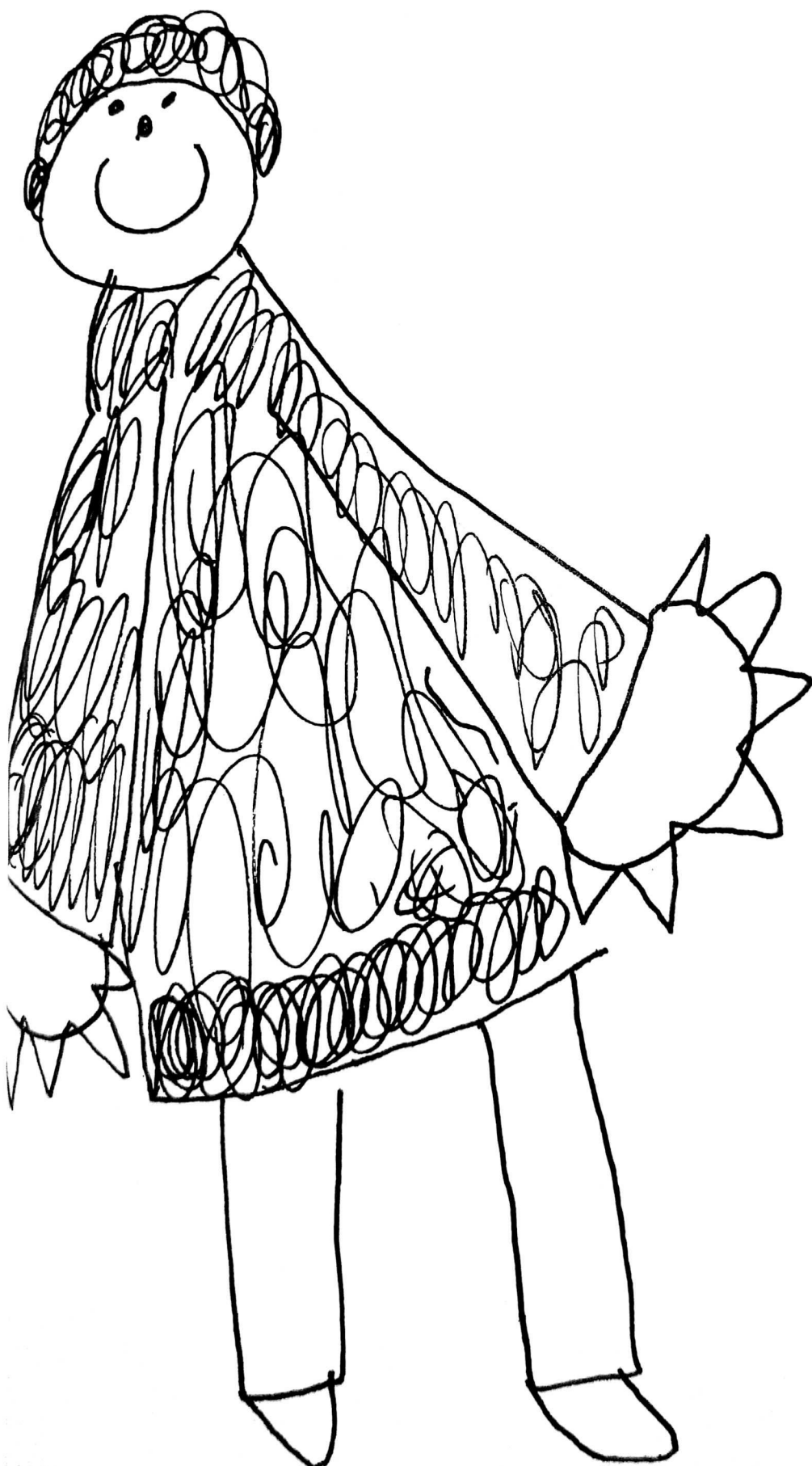
... an indian ...



... a minister ...



. or an Eskimo !



God can feel comfortable
in
a tunic...

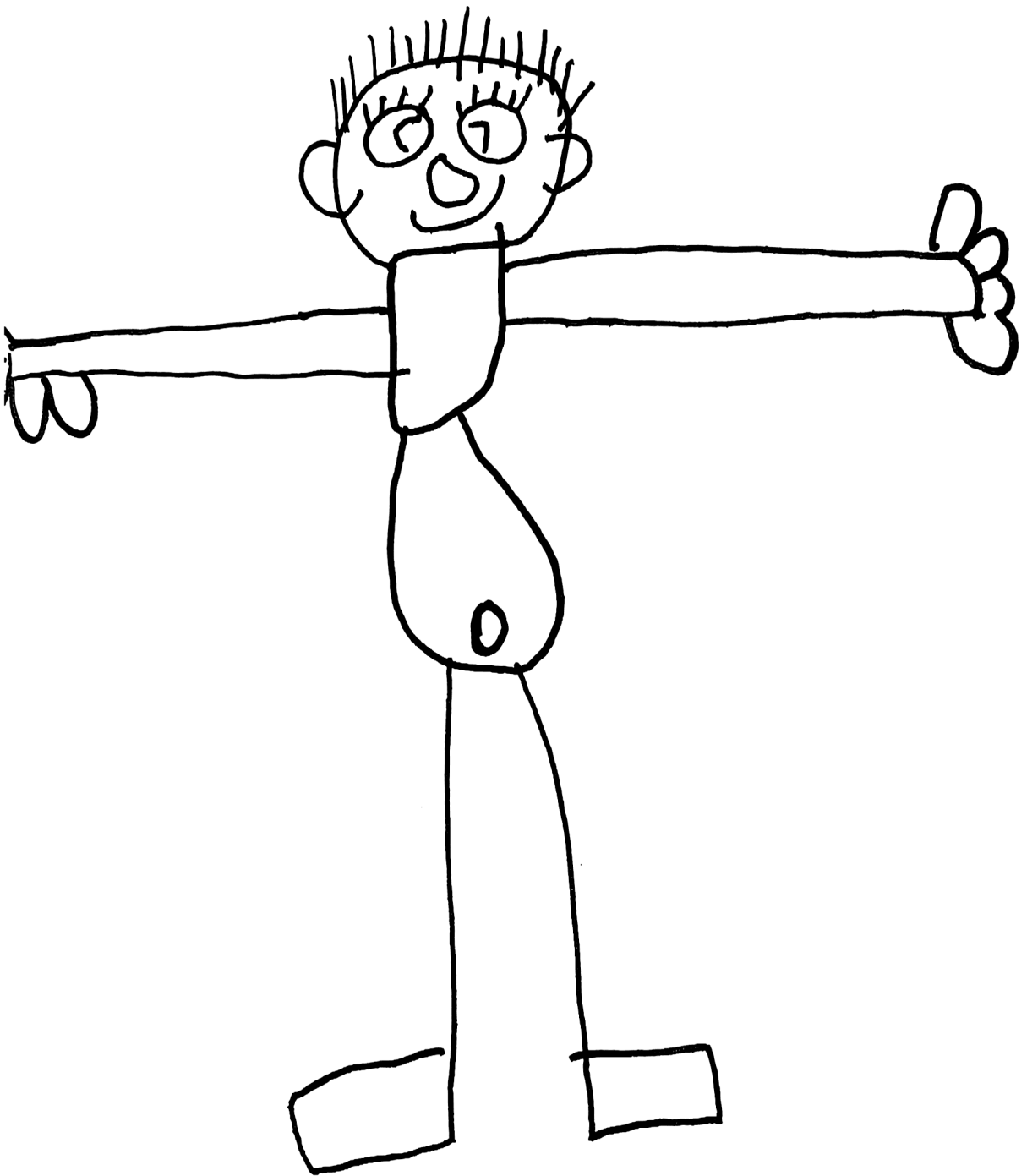


a Cardigan sweater...





... just a sheet ...



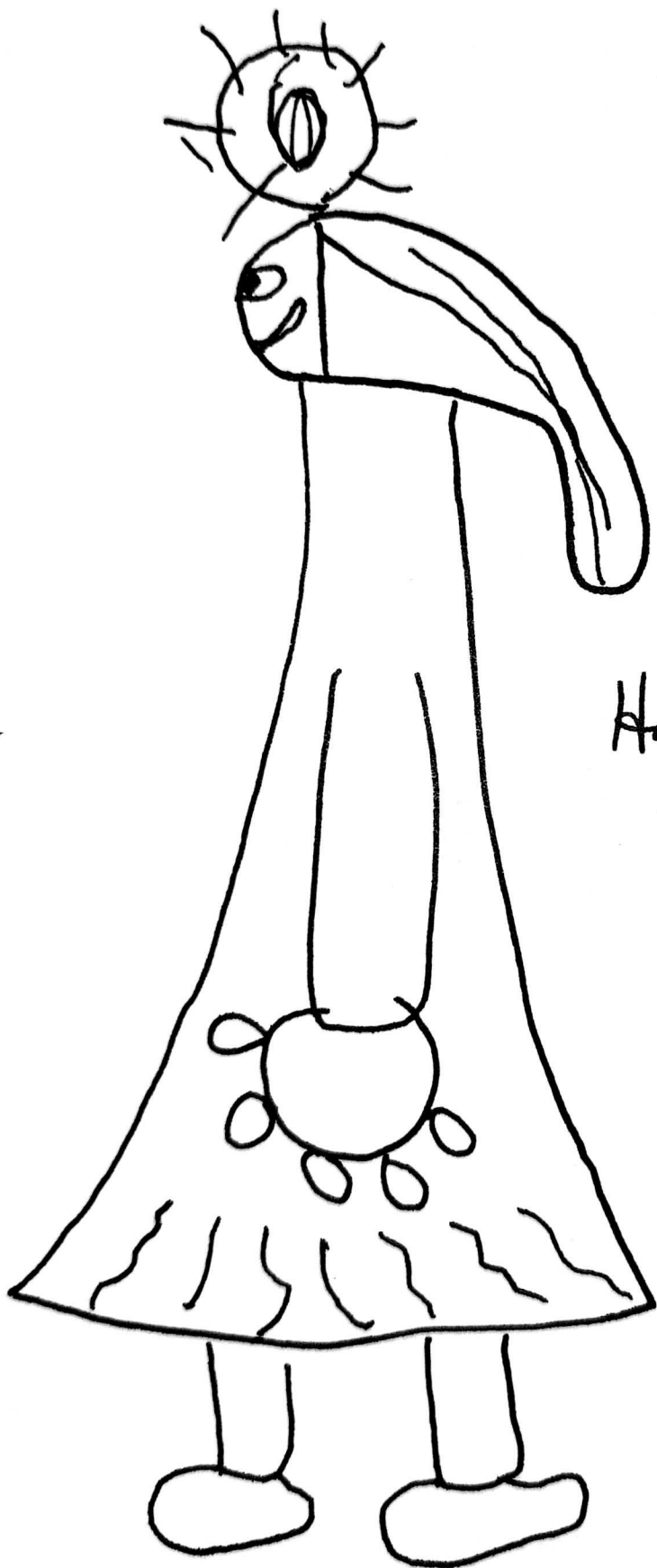
or nothing at all!

Halo's are a very
important part of
God's wardrobe.
Halo's can be
simple....



...or fancy





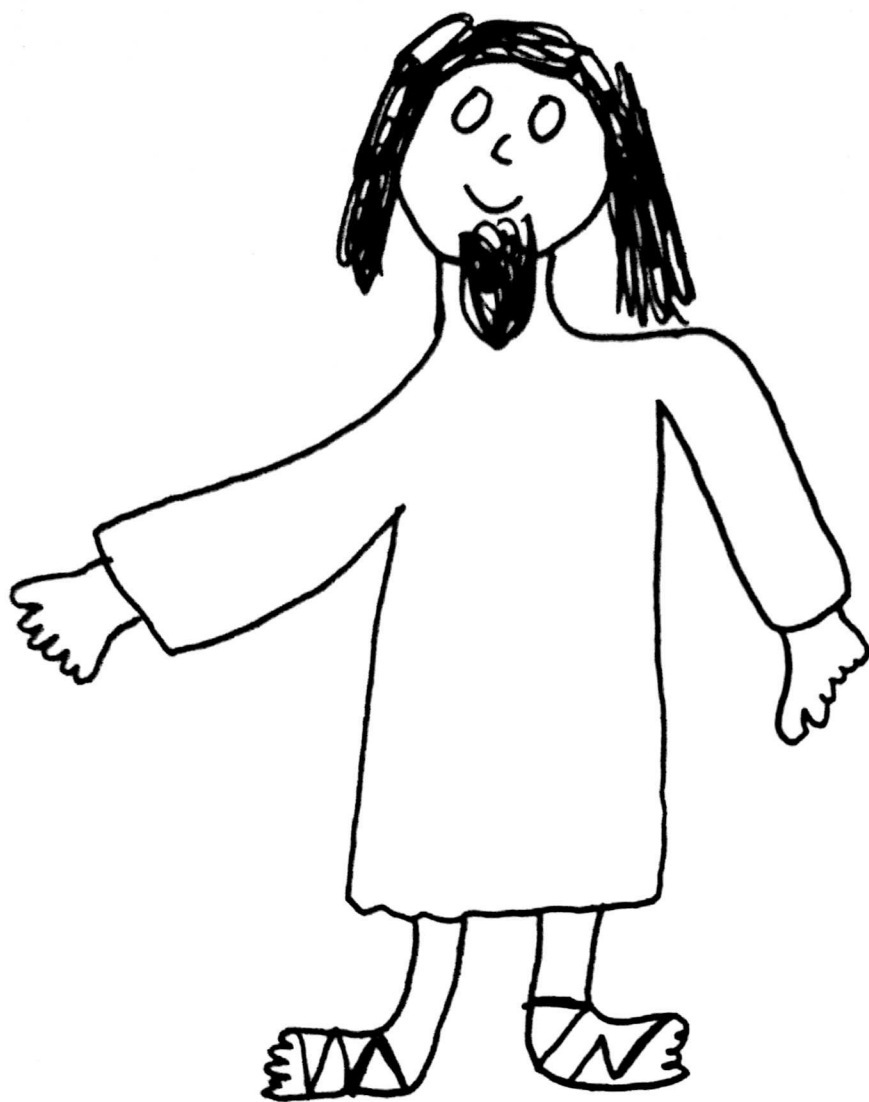
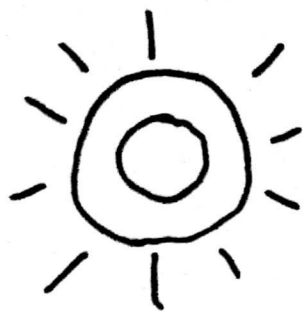
Haloes can
be big...



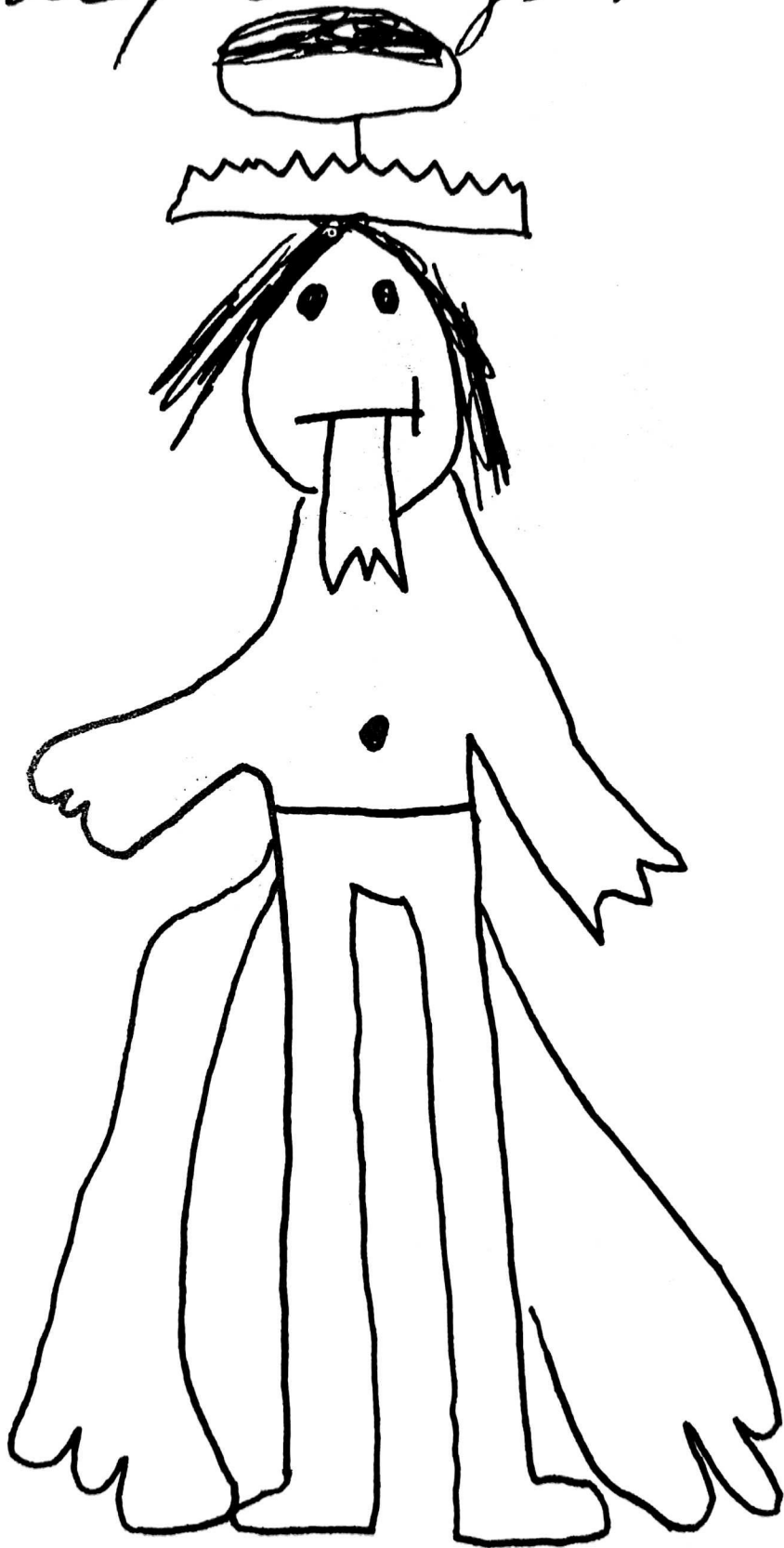
Sometimes haloes
are attached ...



some are not
attached....



... some are even
worn with other
fancy things!

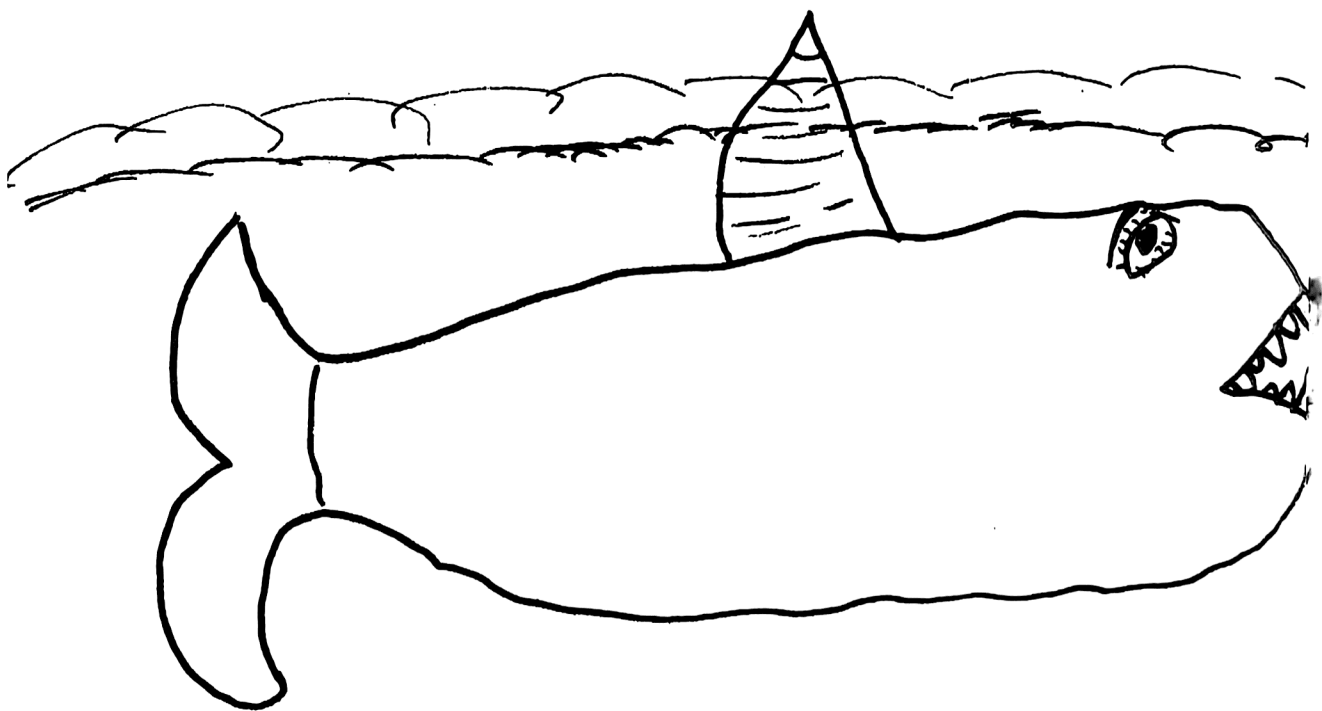


5.

Famous People God
looks Like

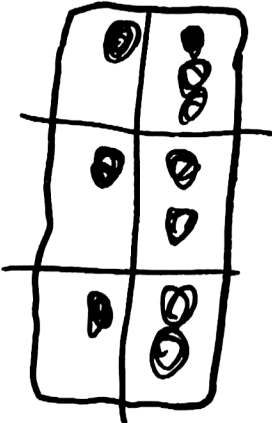
THE JAWS GOD

LAWS

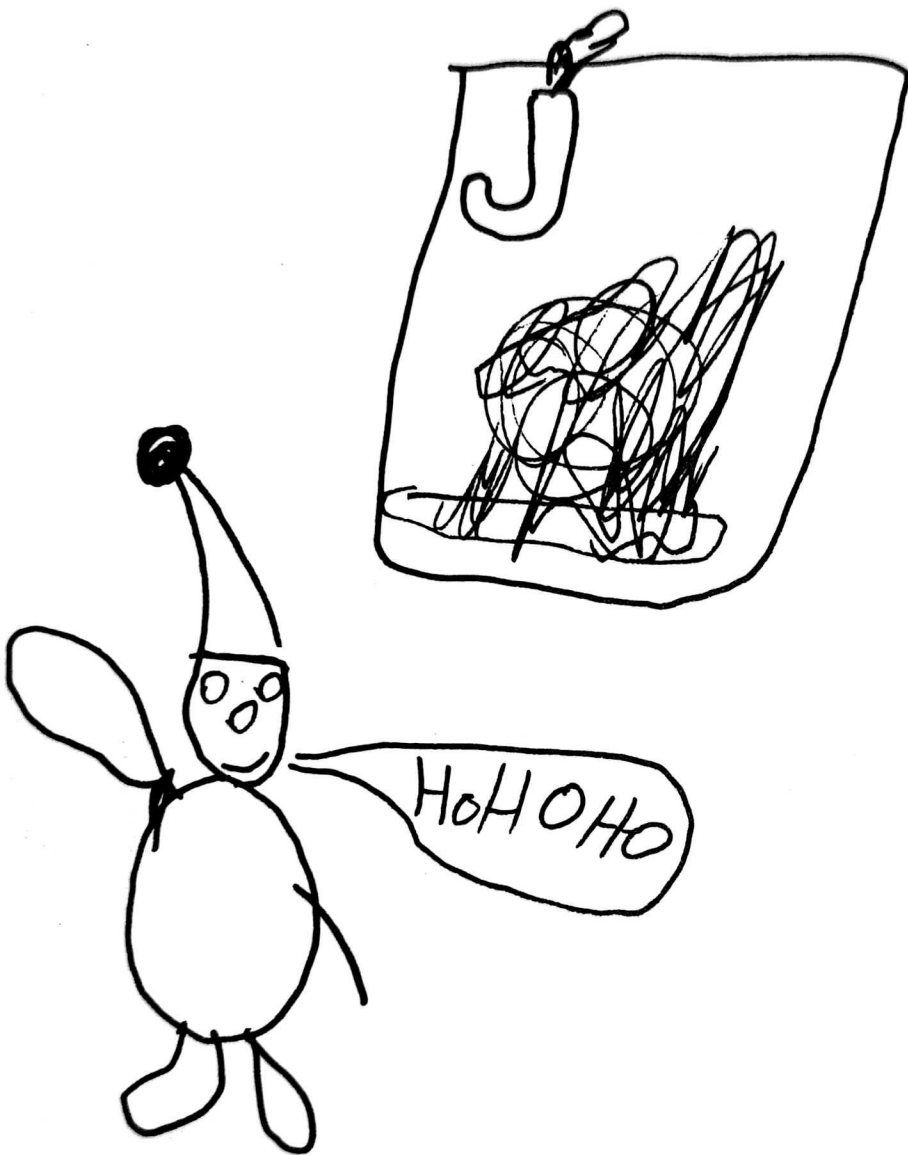




THE SANTA CLAUS



GOD

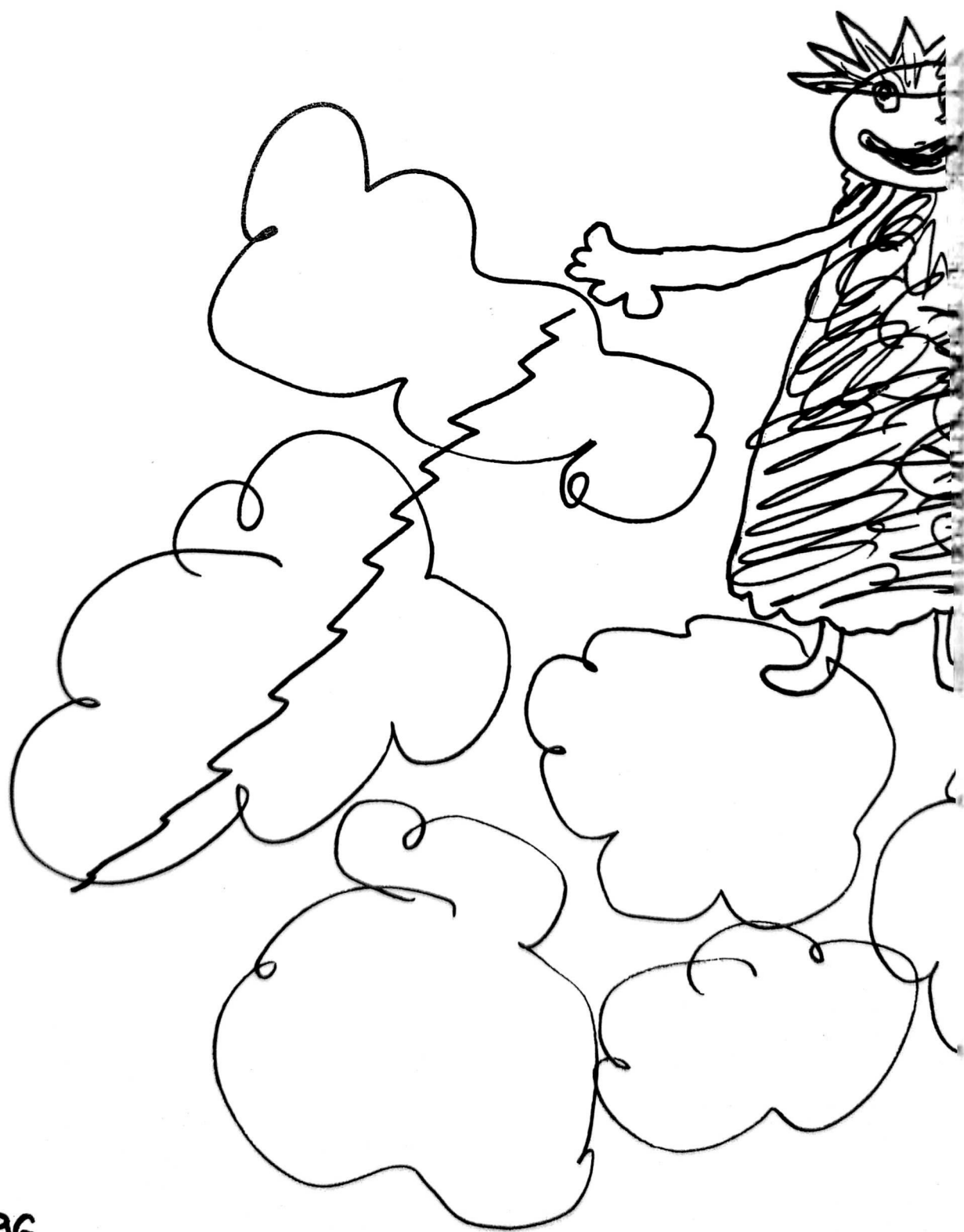


THE SPIDER MAN GOD

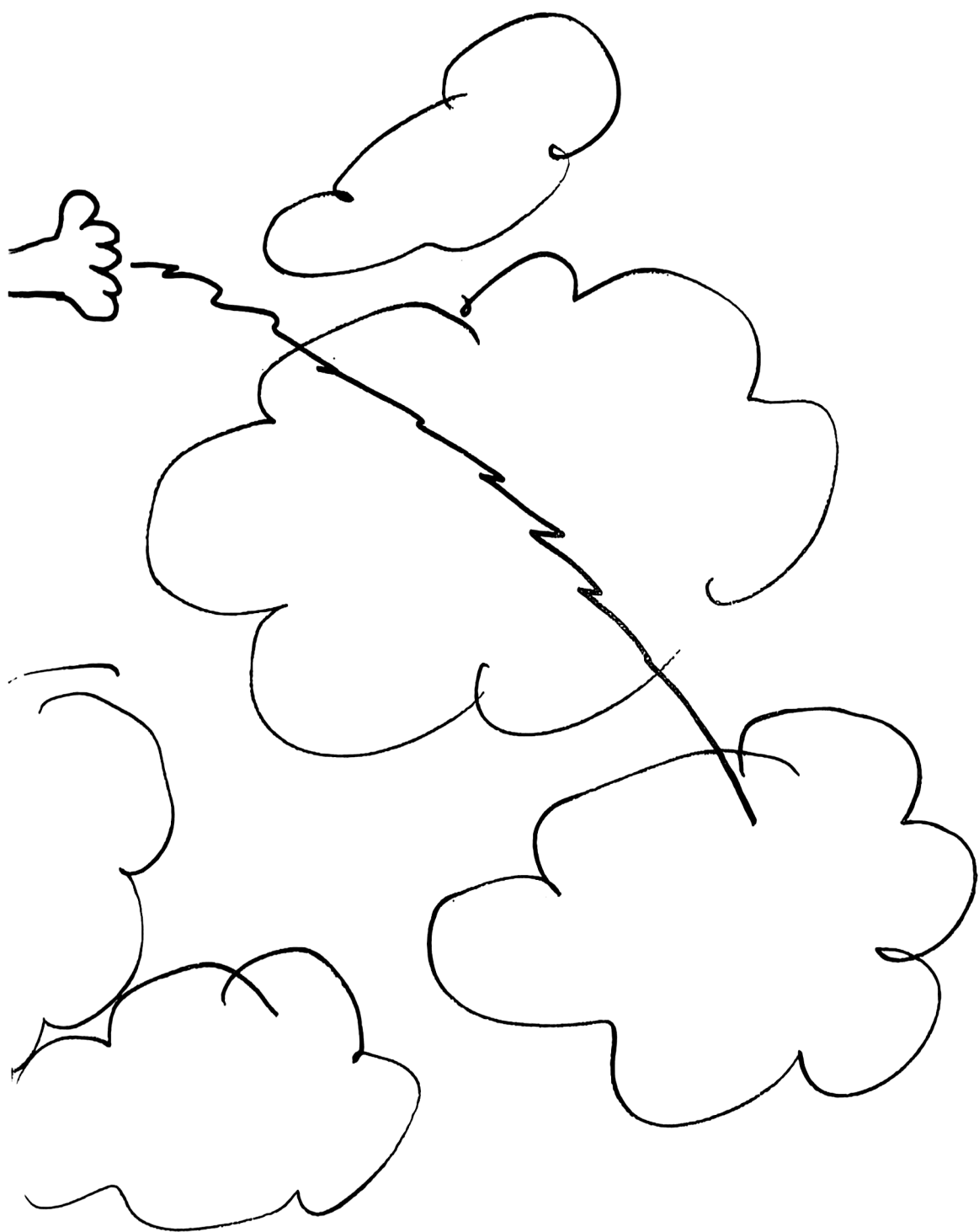




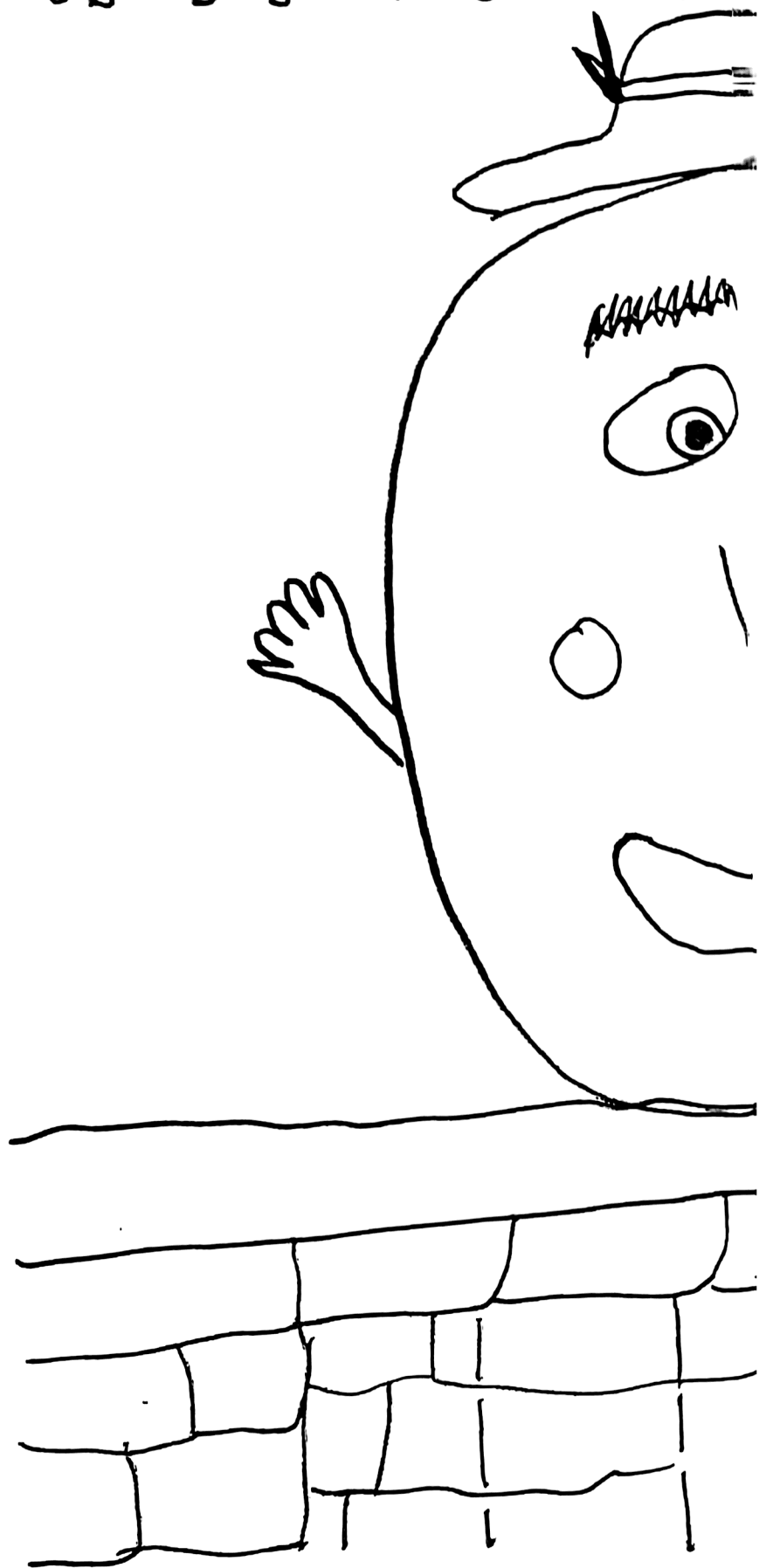
THE STATUE (



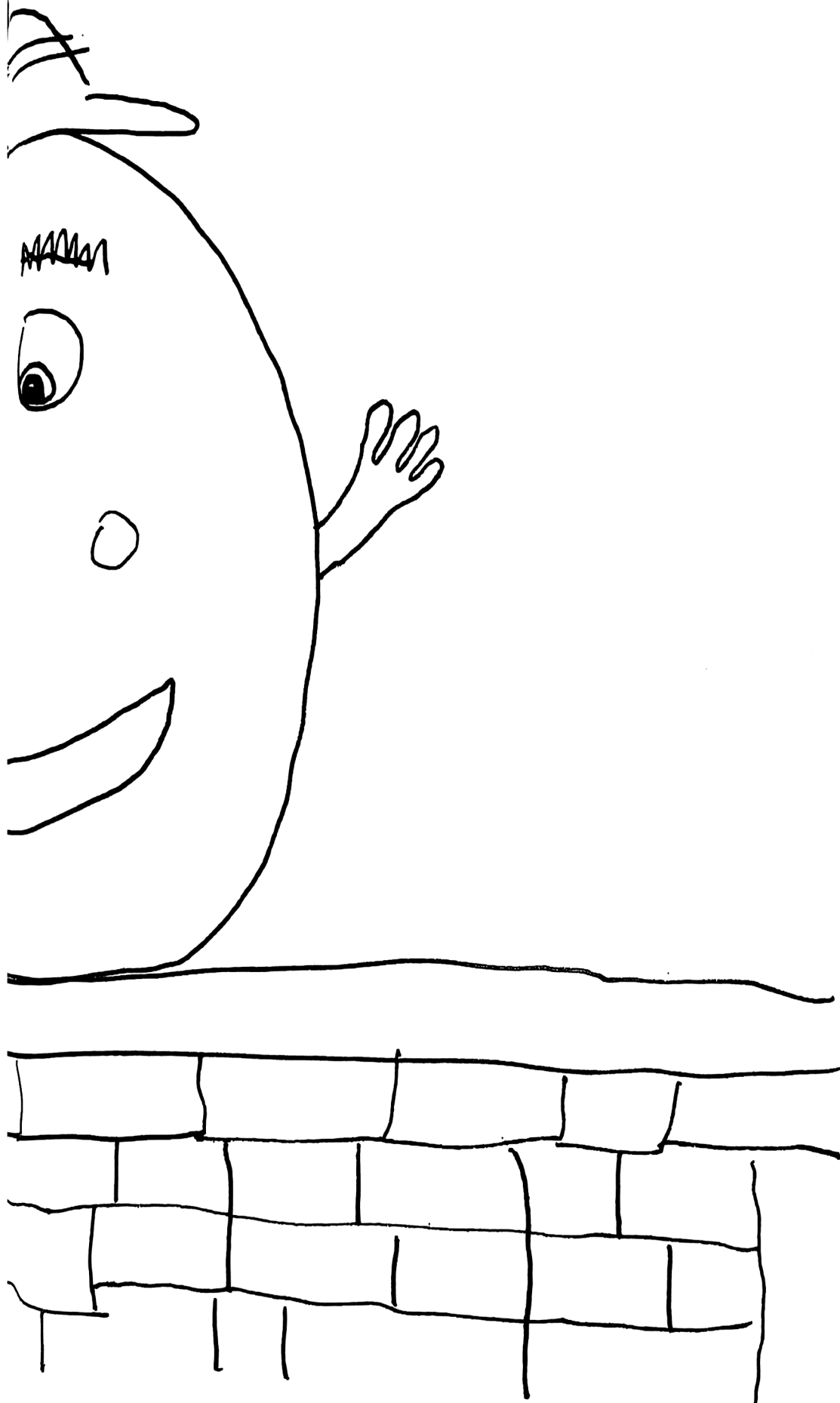
F LIBERTY GOD



THE HUMPTY DUMP



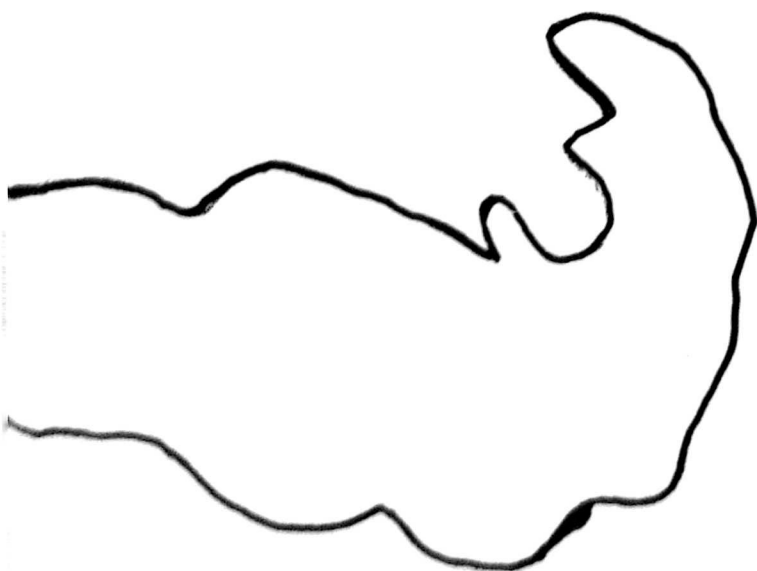
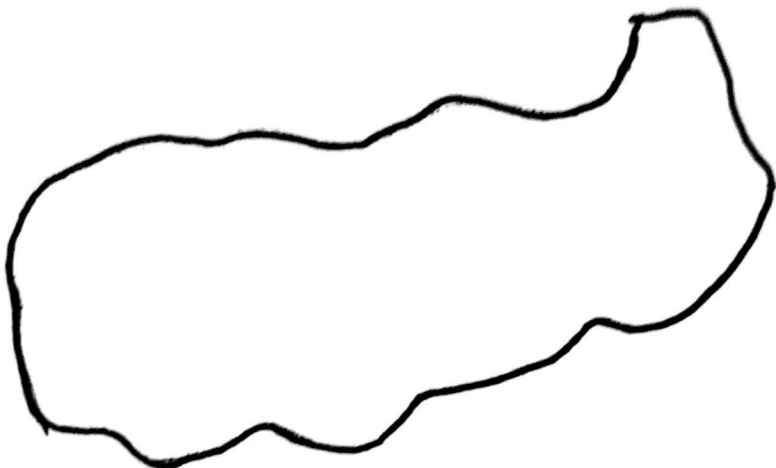
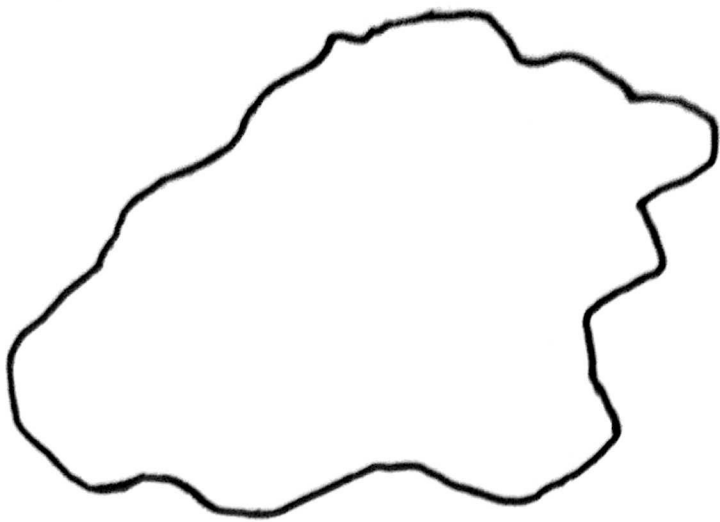
Y GOD



THE WIZARD OF OZ



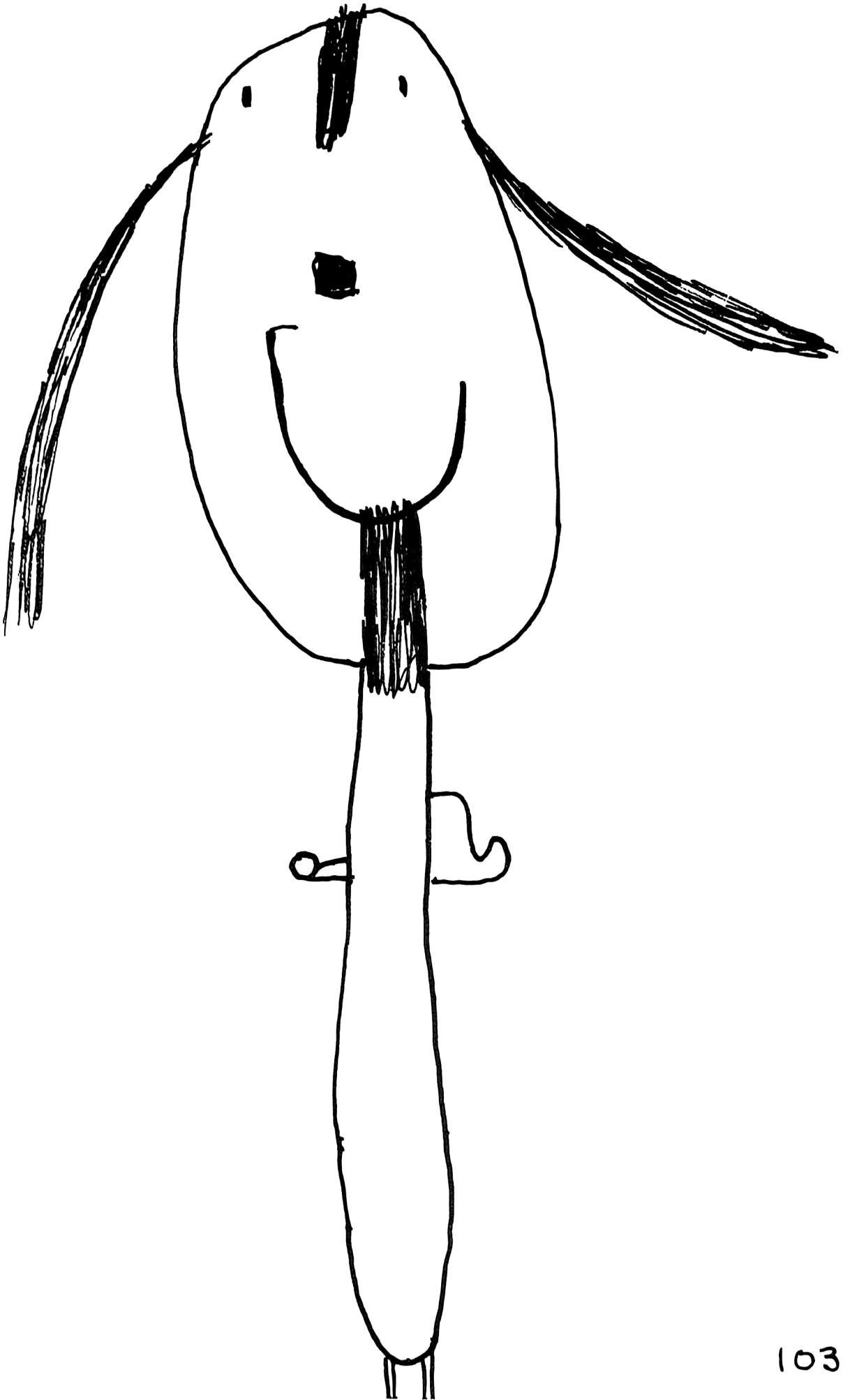
GOD



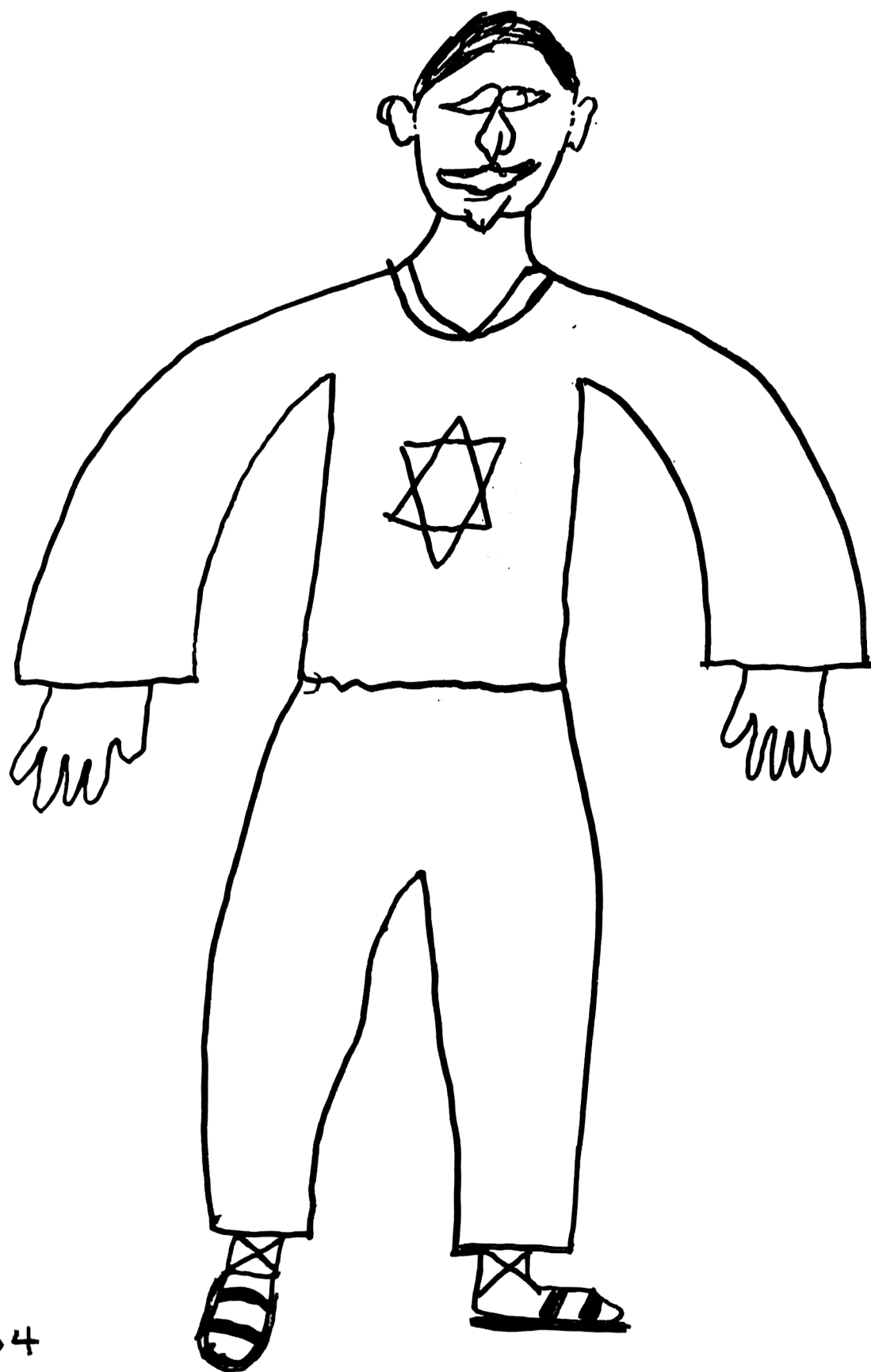
THE MOSES GOD



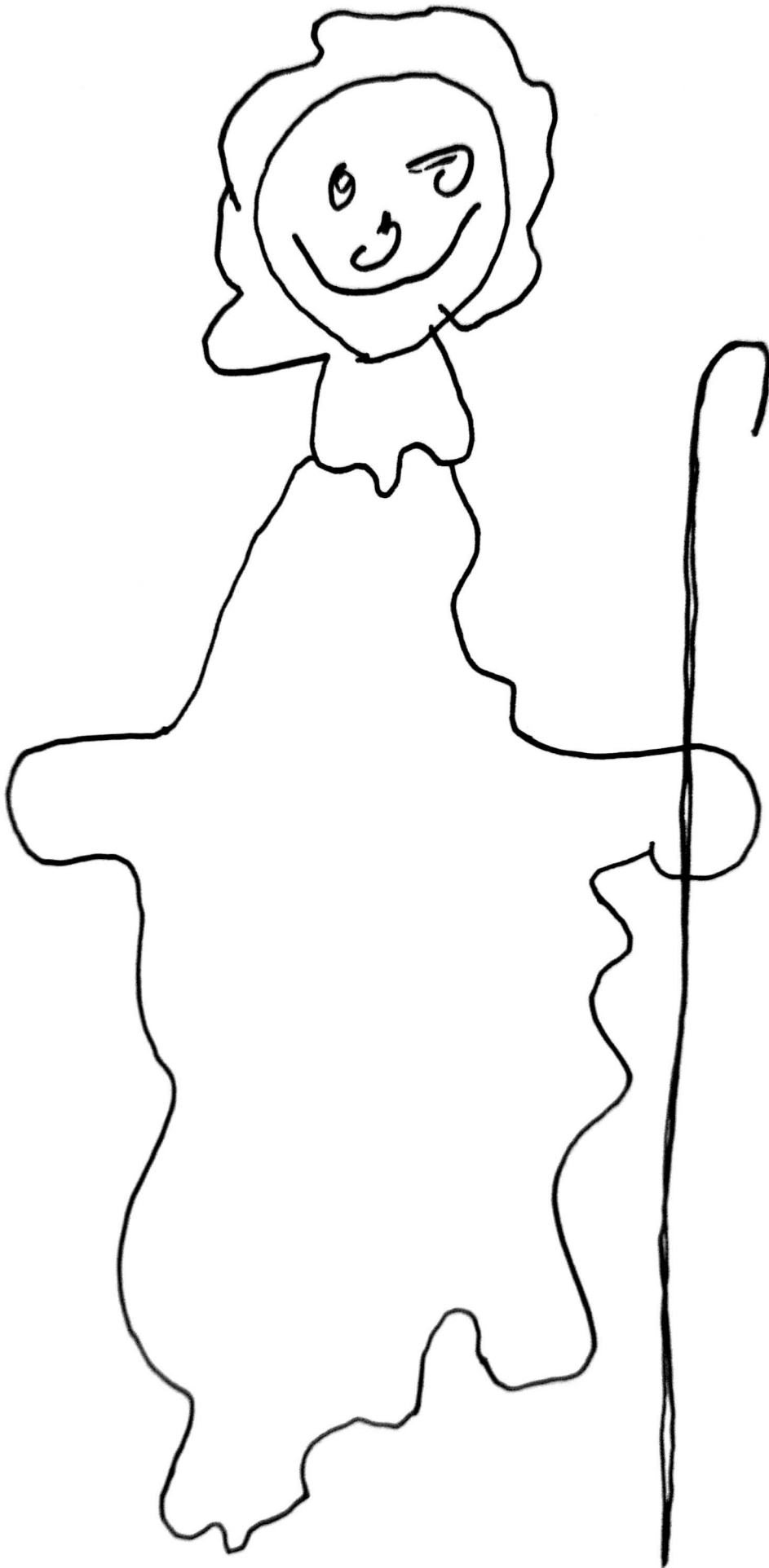
THE SNOOPY GOD



THE SUPERMAN GOD



THE
LITTLE BO PEEP
GOD



THE CASPER THE



HOST_{GOD}





6.

The Biblical God

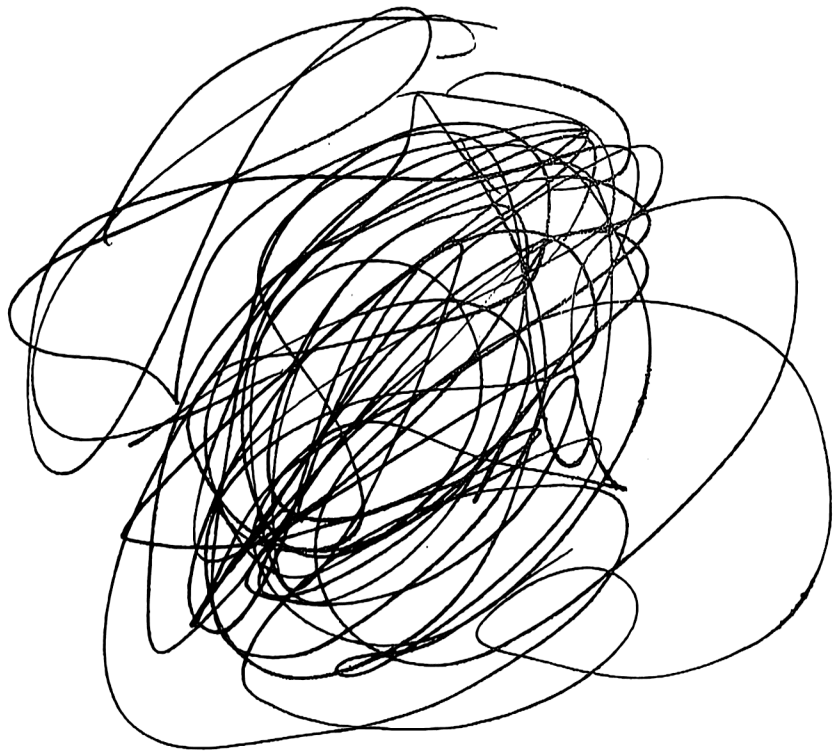


IN THE BEGINNING
GOD CREATED THE
HEAVENS
AND
THE EARTH.

— Genesis 1:1

NOW THE EARTH
WAS
A FORMLESS
VOID...

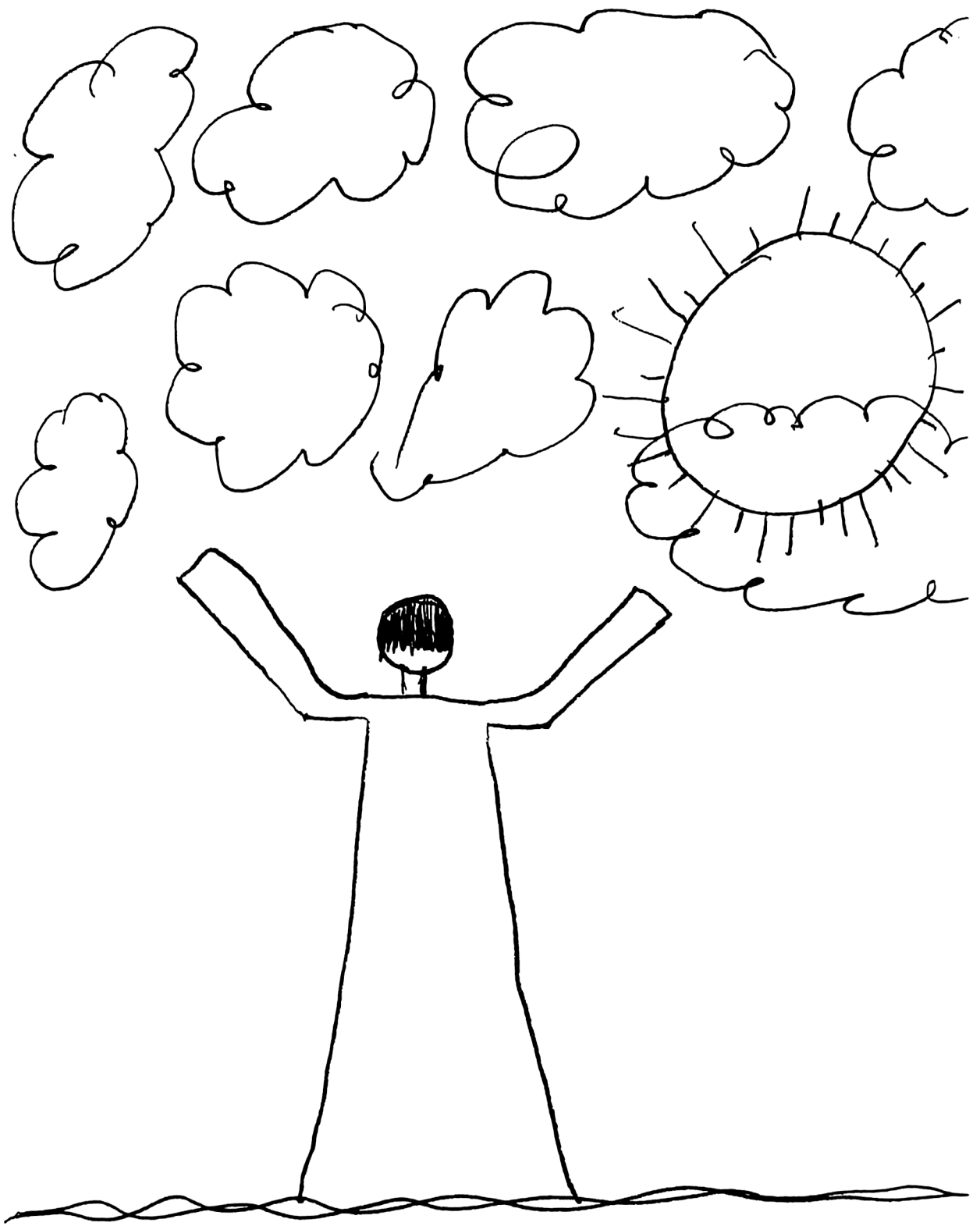
— Genesis 1:2



THERE WAS DARKNESS
OVER THE DEEP AND
GOD'S SPIRIT
HOVERED OVER
THE WATER.

-Genesis 1:2

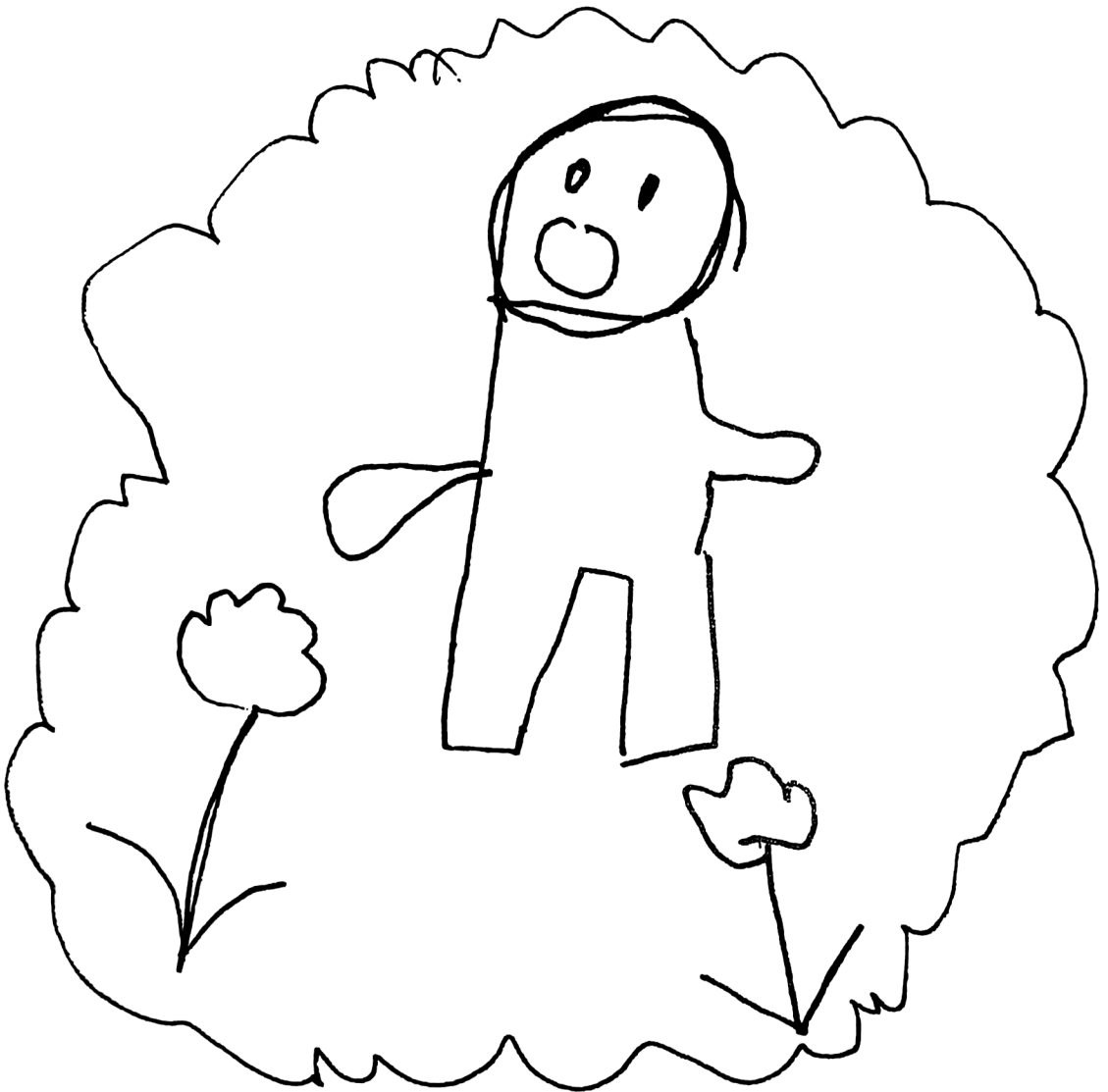




GOD SAID "LET THERE
BE LIGHT," AND
THERE WAS
LIGHT.

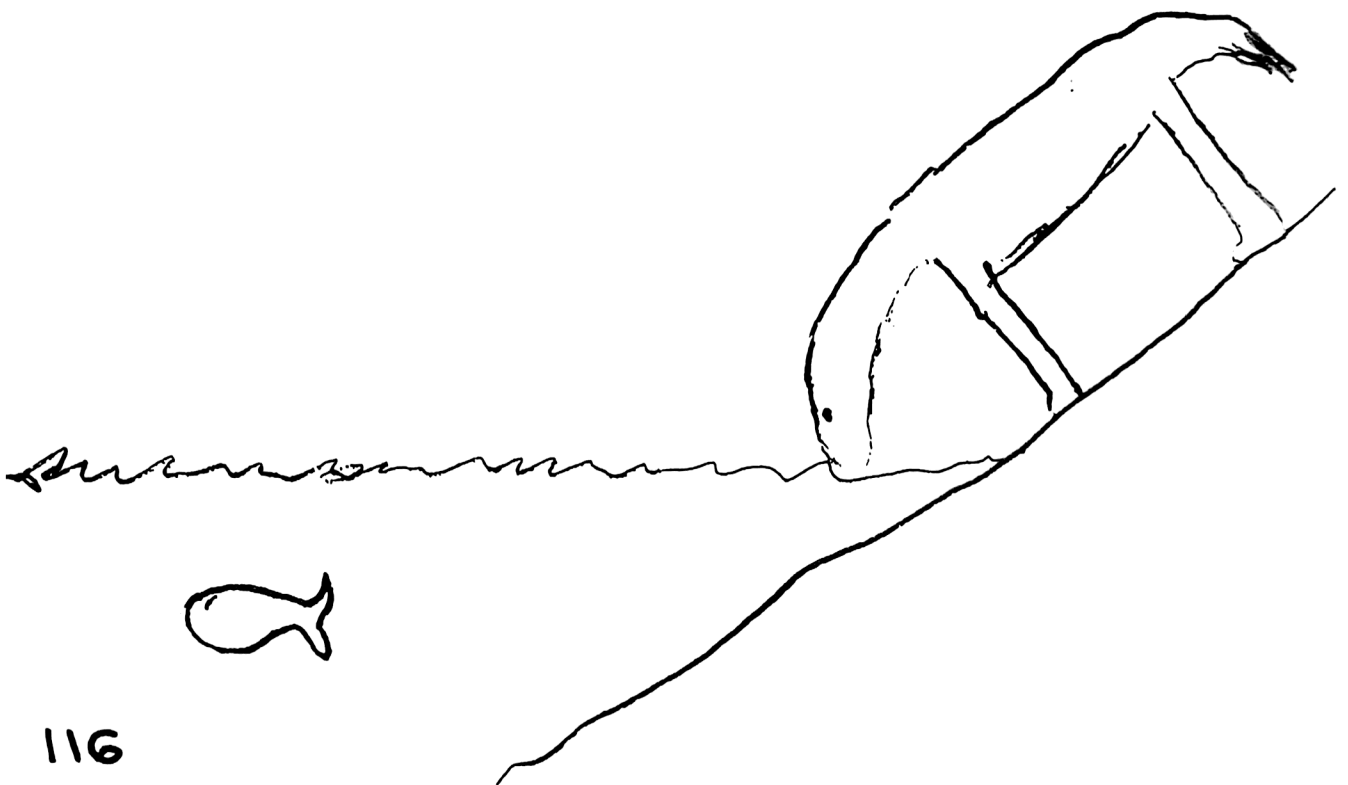
GOD SAID "LET THE EARTH
PRODUCE VEGETATION: SEED-
BEARING PLANTS..."

- Genesis 1: 11-12

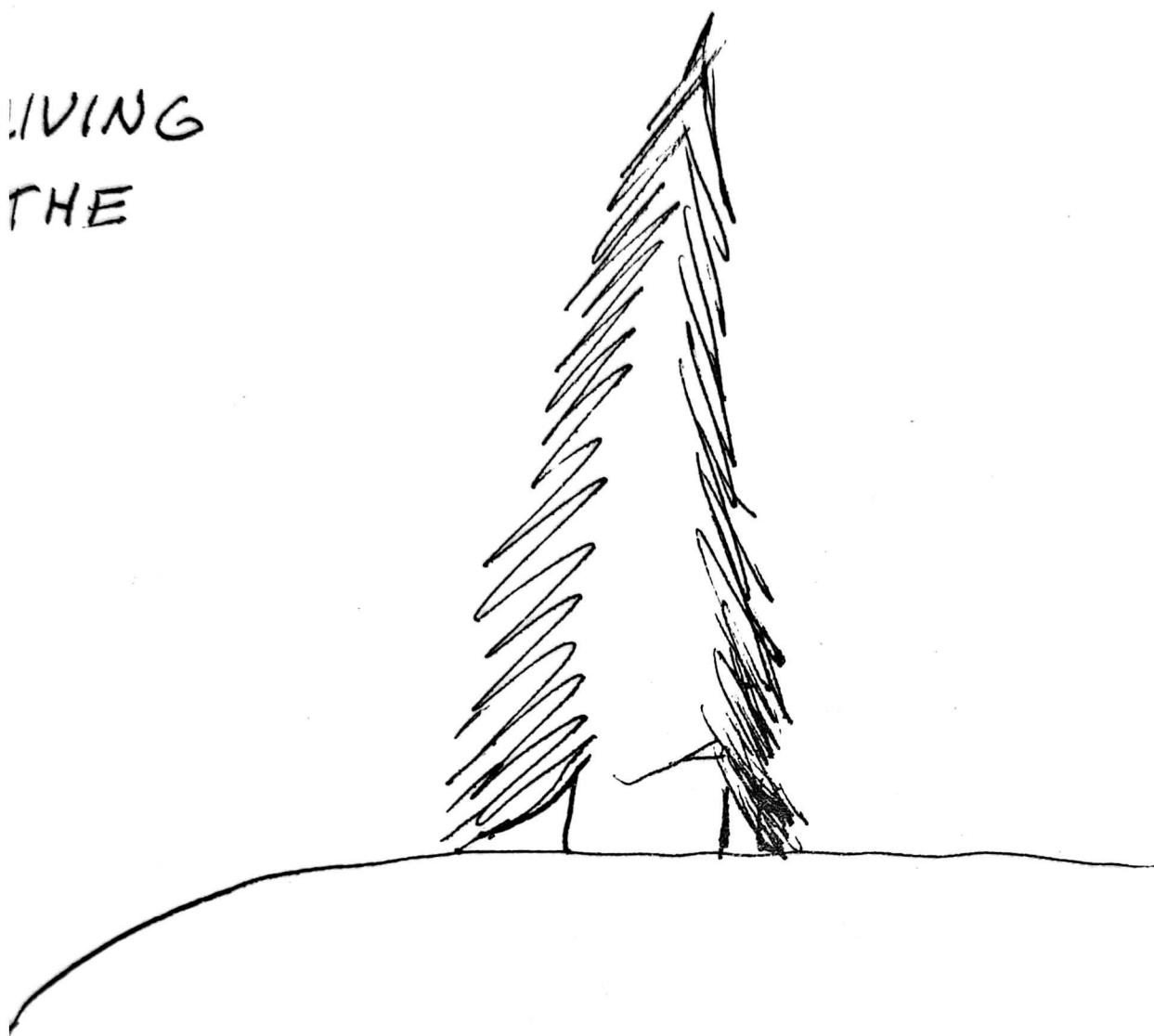


GOD SAID "LET THE
WATERS TEEM WITH
CREATURES, AND... LET
EARTH PRODUCE
EVERY KIND OF
LIVING CREATURE..

- Genesis 1:20,24



LIVING
THE



GOD SAID "LET US MAKE
IMAGE IN THE LIK



MAN IN OUR OWN
NESS OF OURSELVES..."

- Genesis 1:26





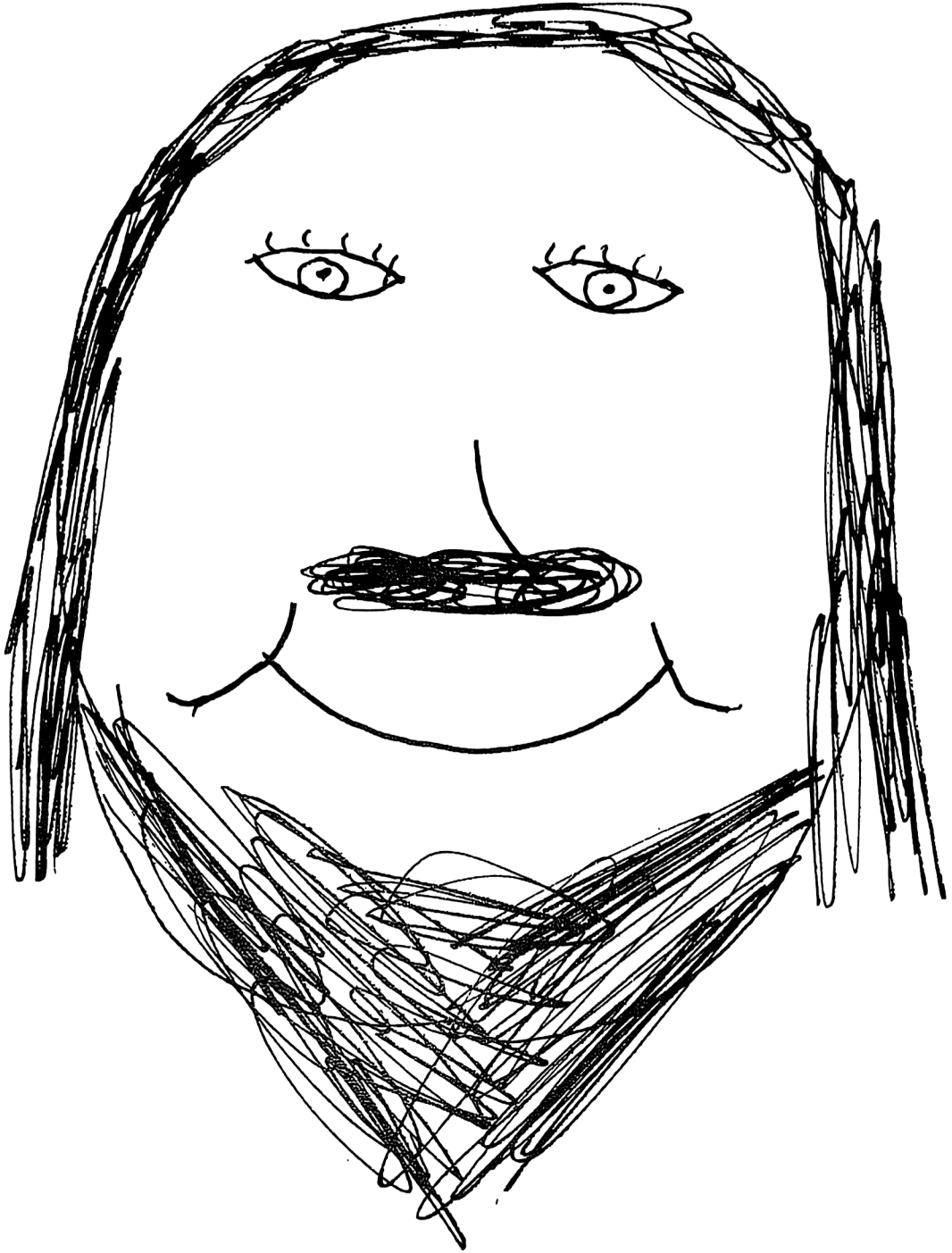
GOD SAW ALL HE HAD
MADE AND INDEED IT
WAS VERY GOOD.

THE ANGEL OF YAHWEH
APPEARED TO MOSES IN
THE SHAPE OF A FLAME
OF FIRE COMING FROM
THE MIDDLE OF
A BUSH...

- Exodus 3:2, 4



God!



AND GOD SAID TO
MOSES,
"I AM WHO I AM."

- Exodus 3:14

YAHWEH CAME DOWN ON
THE MOUNTAIN
OF SINAI, ON THE
MOUNTAIN TOP, AND
YAHWEH CALLED MOSES
TO THE TOP OF
THE MOUNTAIN...

- Exodus 19:20

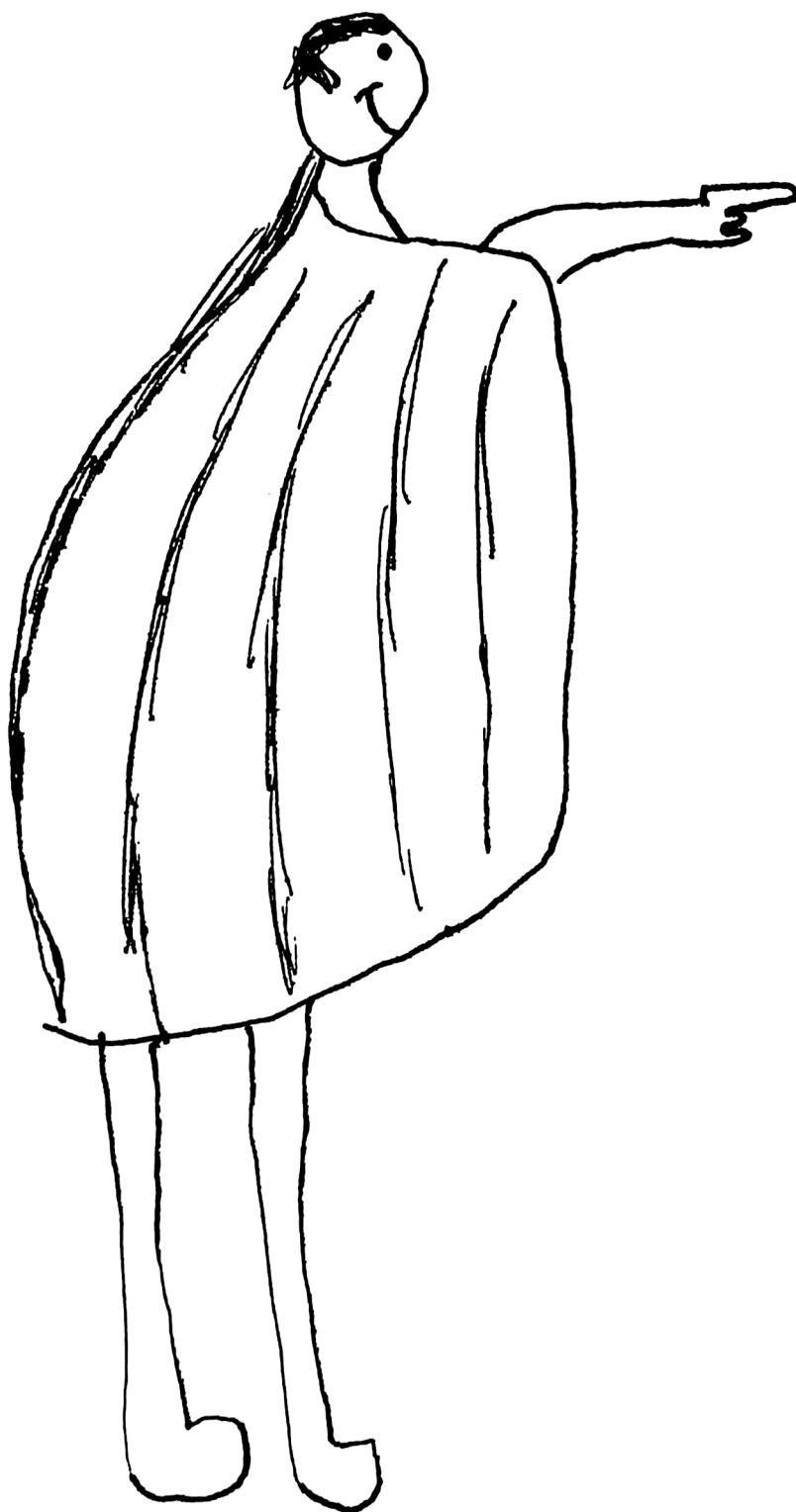




GOD... DID NOT FORSAKE
THEM IN THE WILDERNESS
THE PILLAR OF CLOUD
DID NOT LEAVE THEM...

THIS IS THE
FINGER OF GOD...

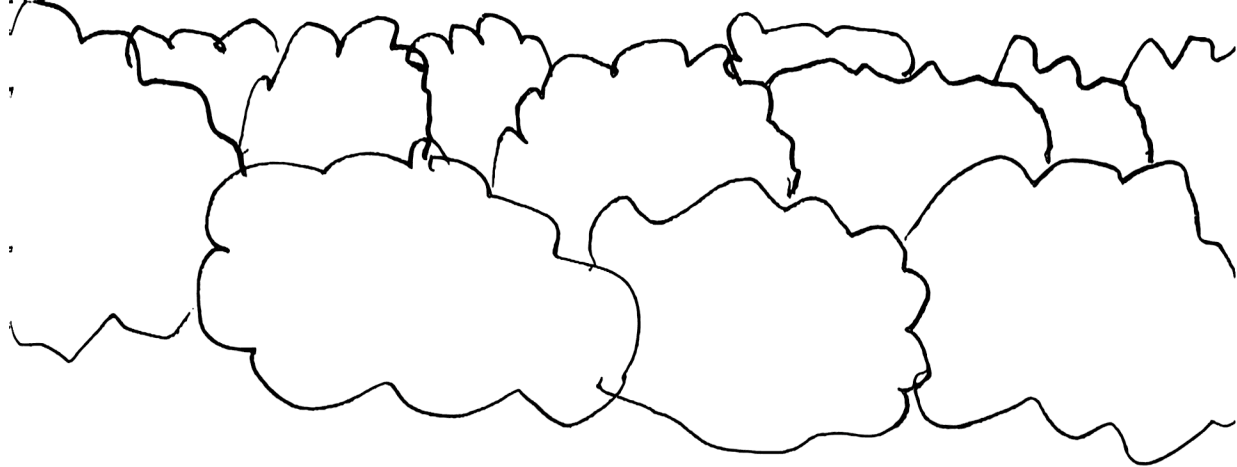
- Genesis 8:19





IF IT IS THROUGH THE FINGER OF
GOD THAT I CAST OUT DEVILS, THEN
KNOW THAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD
HAS OVERTAKEN YOU.

- Luke 11:20

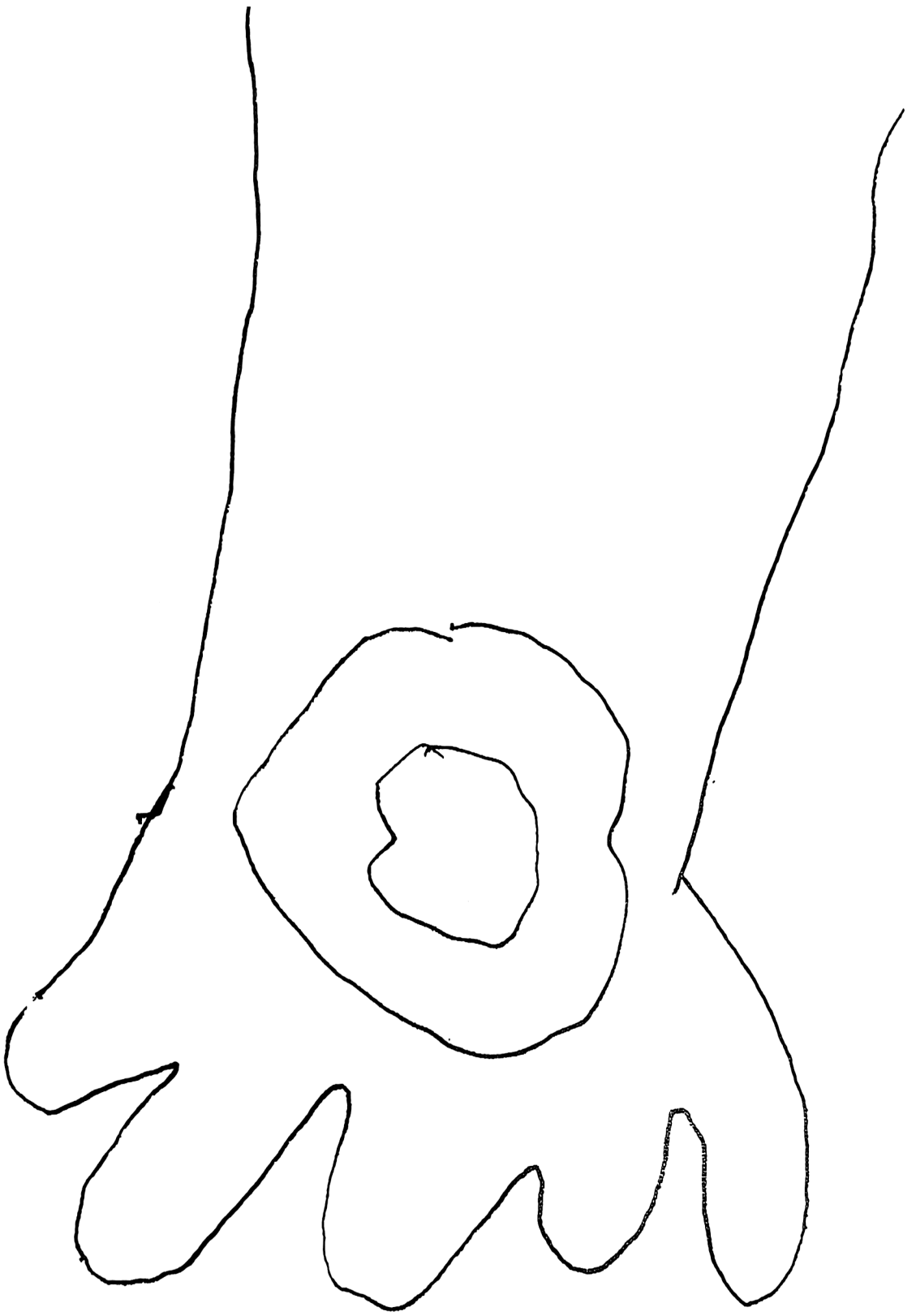


A BRIGHT CLOUD
COVERED THEM WITH
SHADOW,
AND FROM THE CLOUD
THERE CAME
A VOICE
WHICH SAID...

-Matthew 17:5



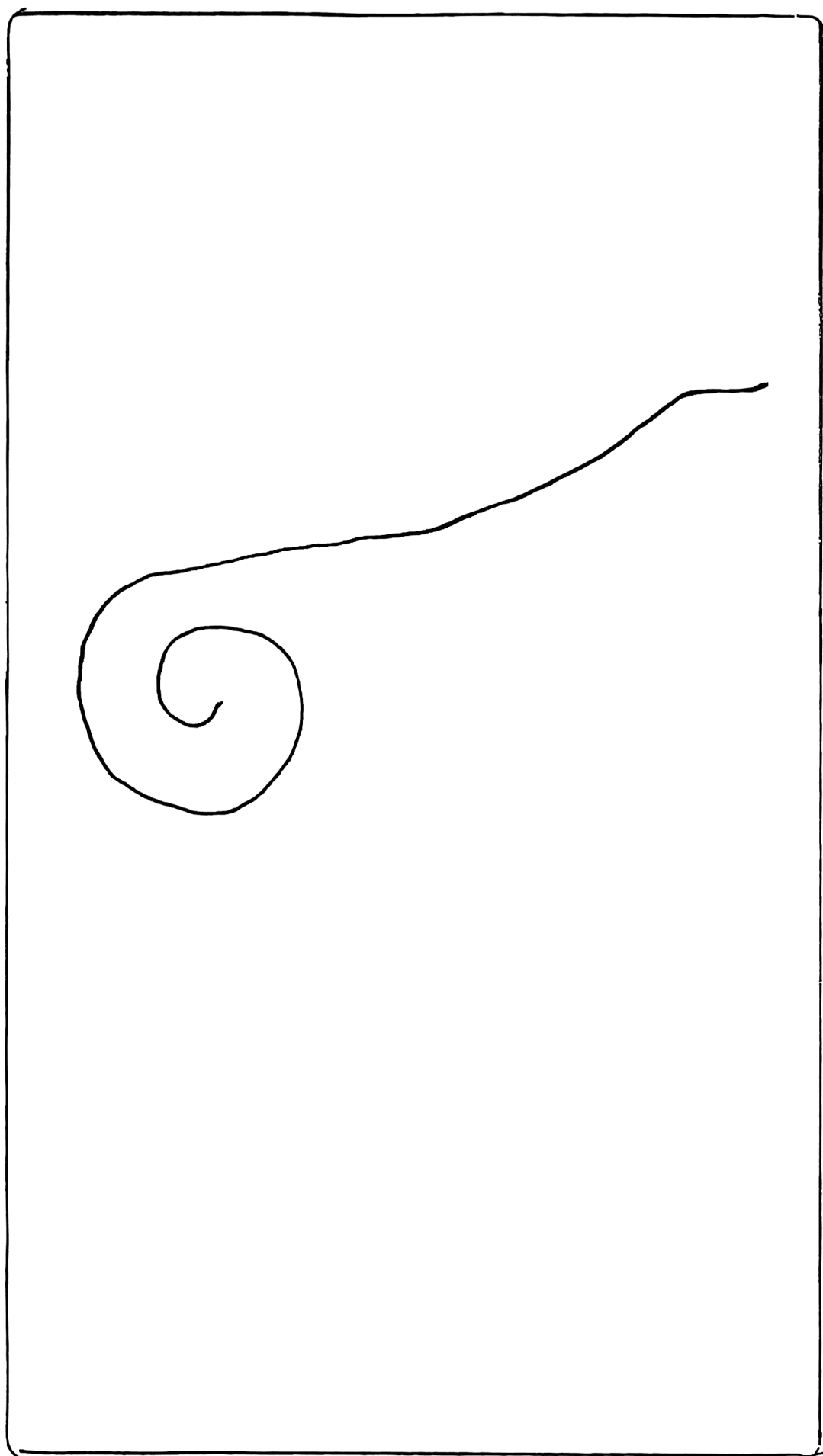
"**T**HIS IS MY SON, THE BELOVED,
WE ENJOYS MY FAVOR. LISTEN
TO HIM."

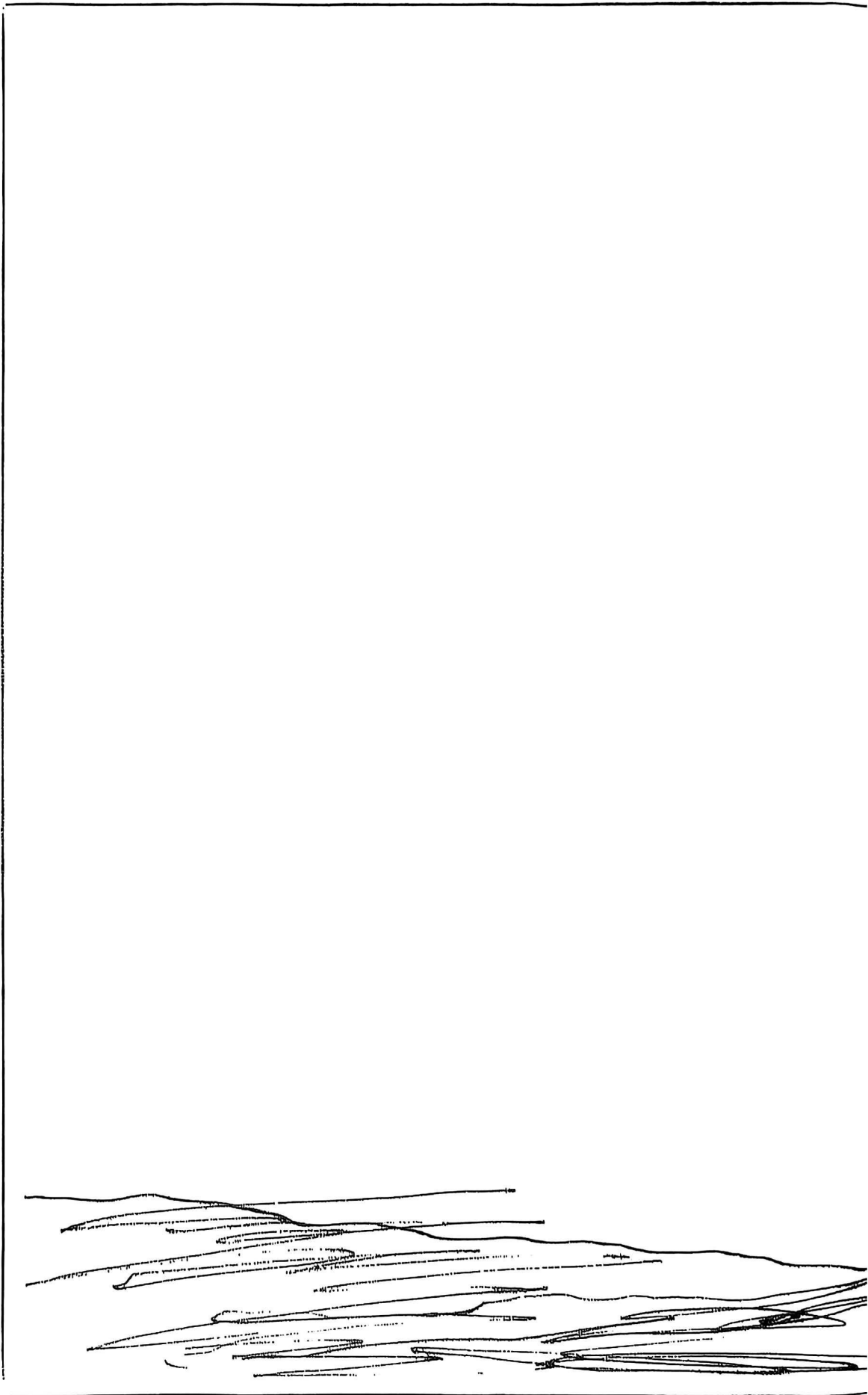


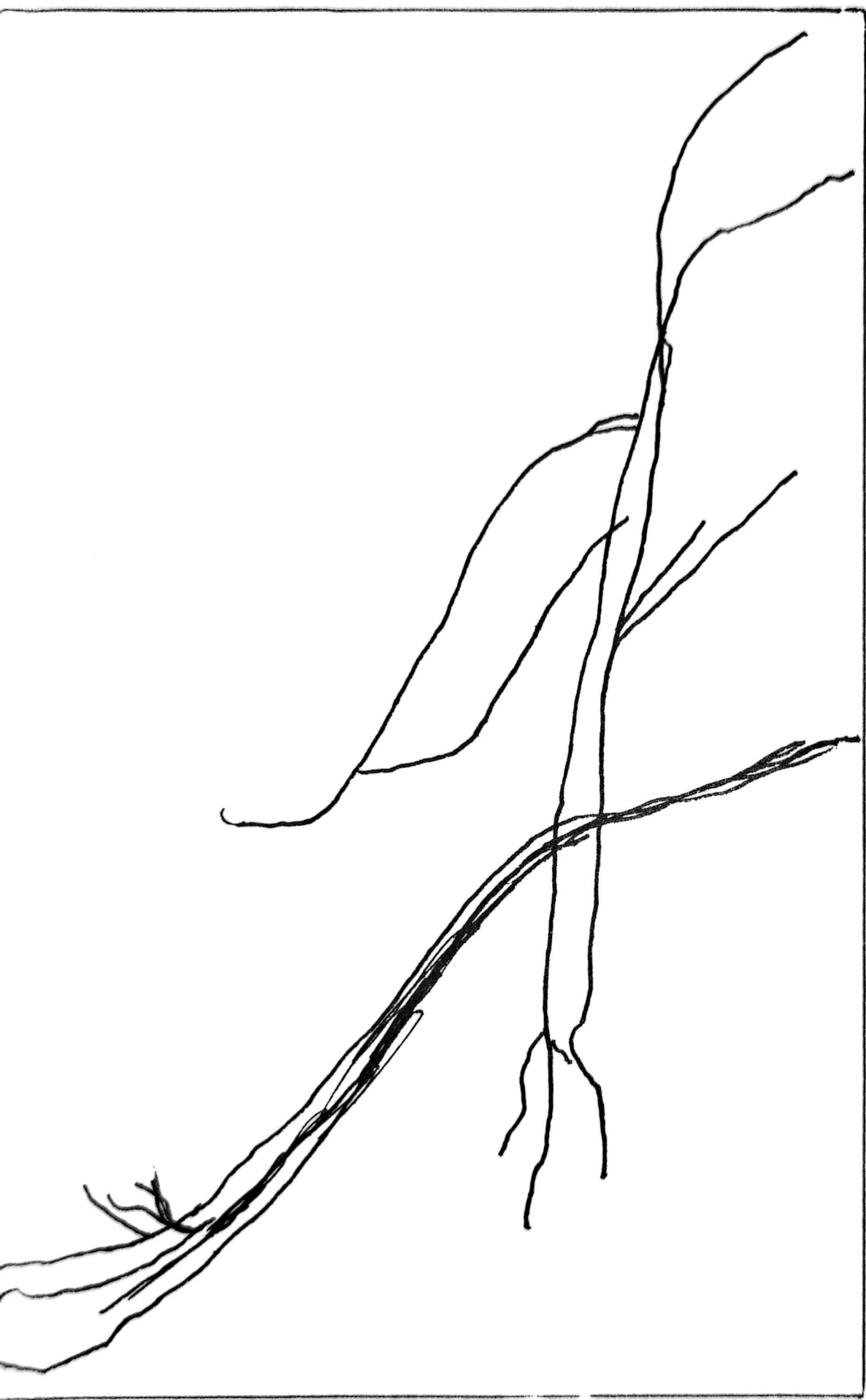
GIVE US EACH DAY
OUR DAILY BREAD...

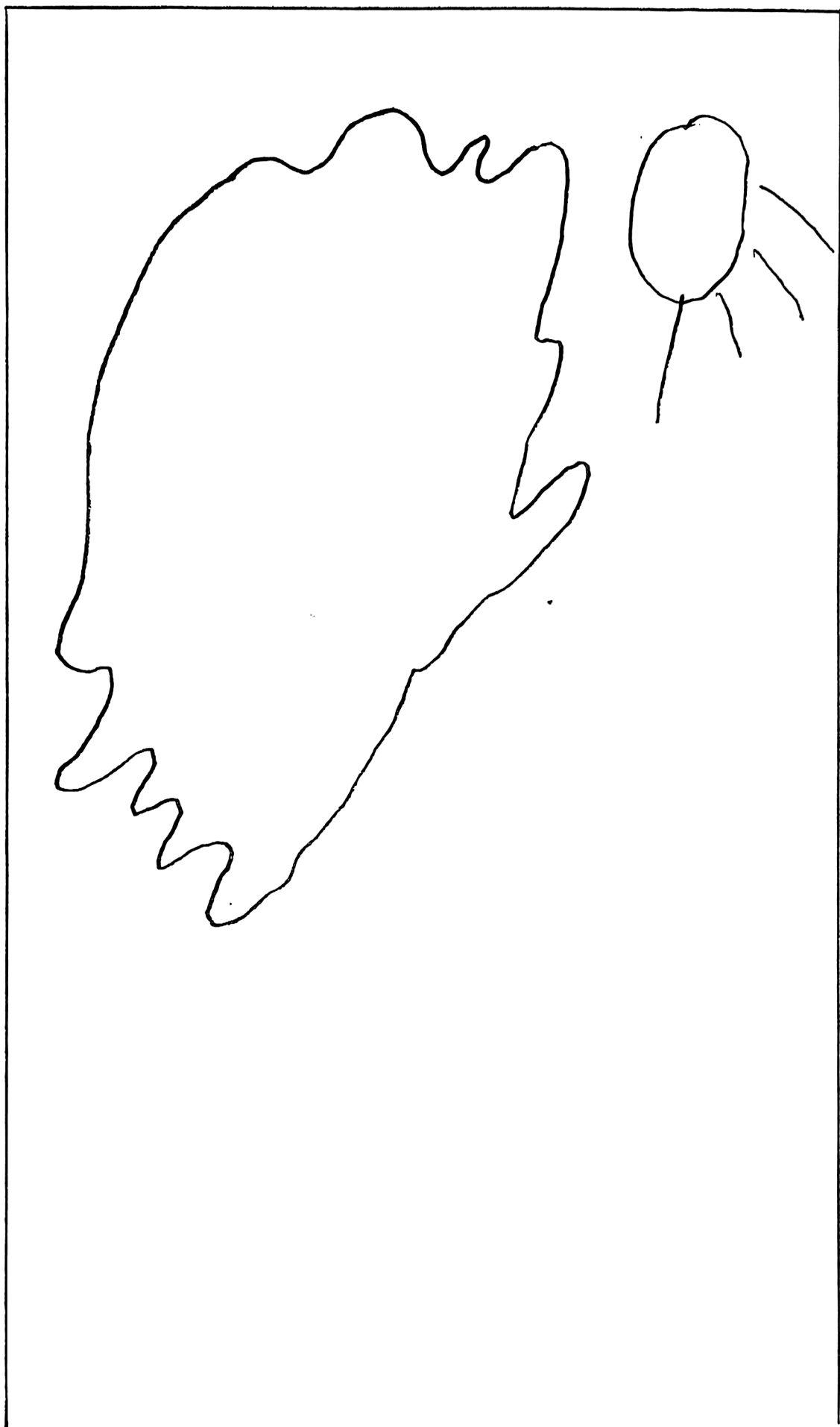
7.

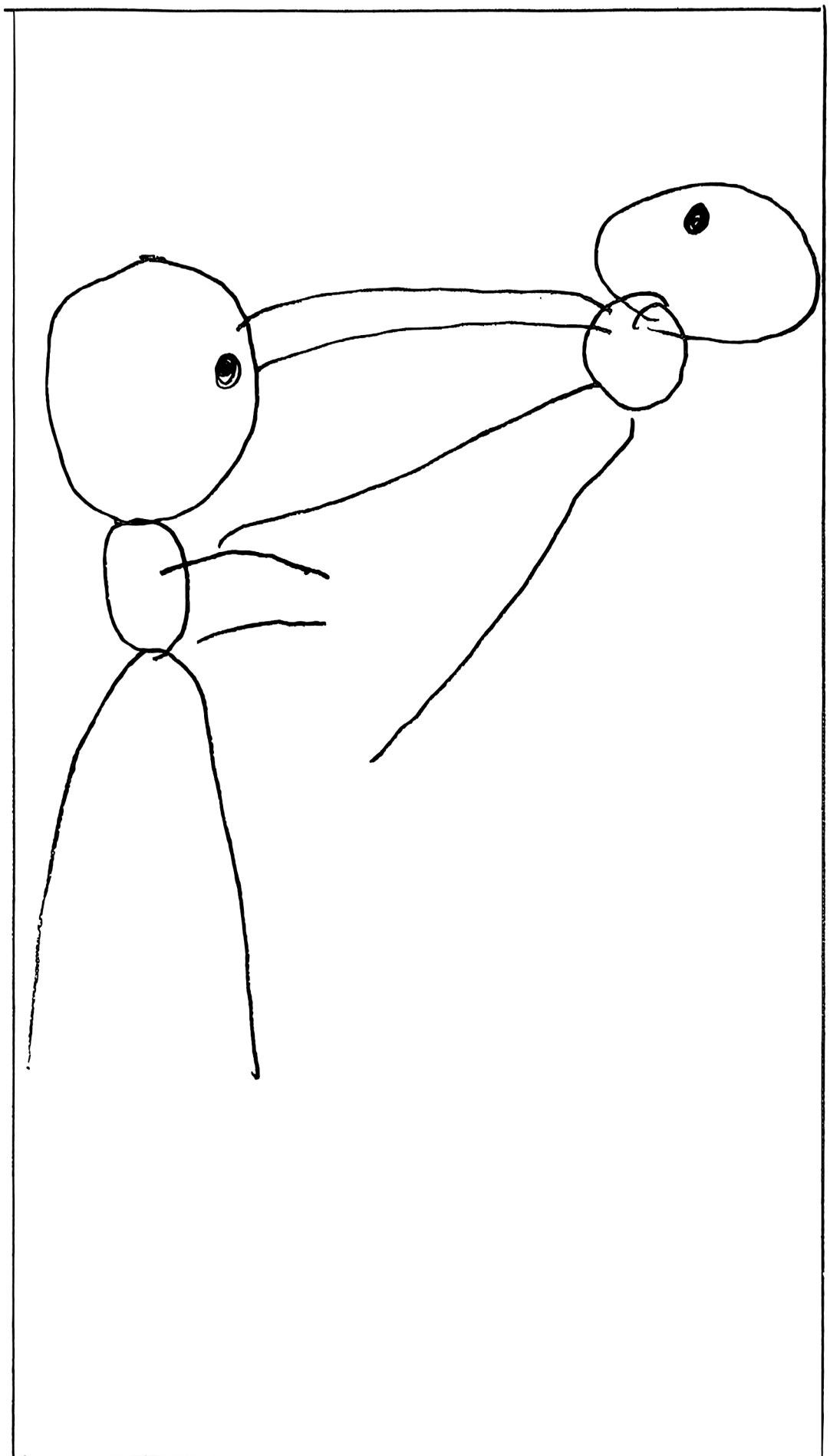
Gods to Ponder



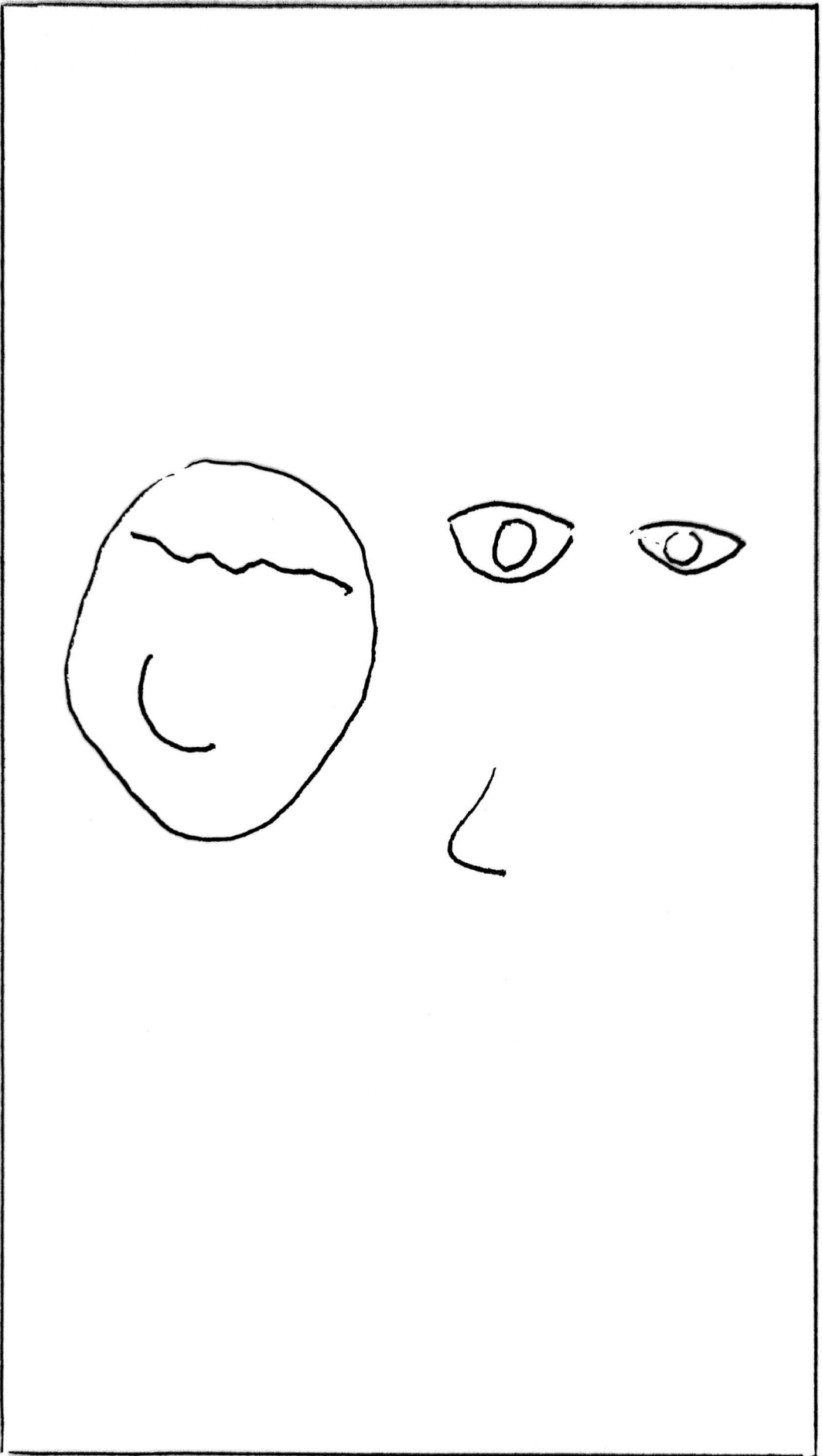




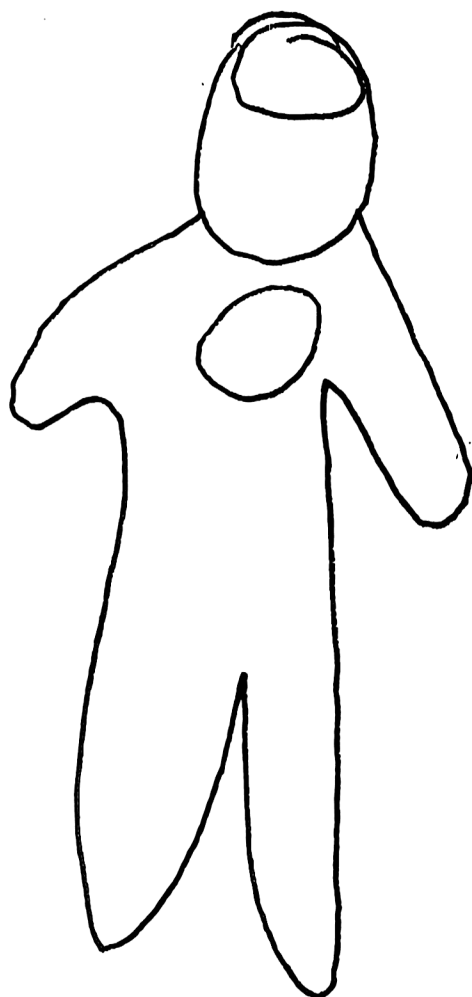






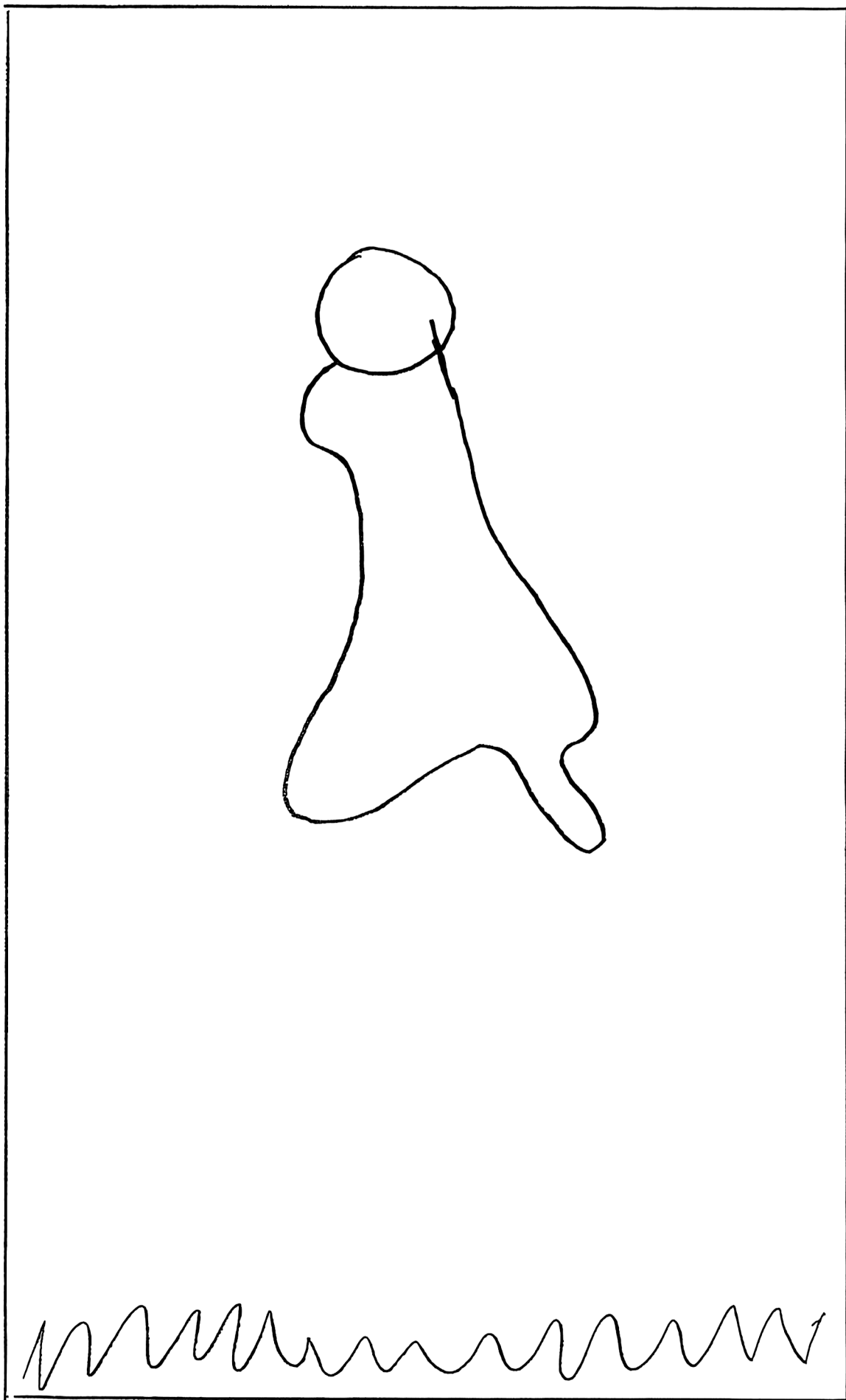


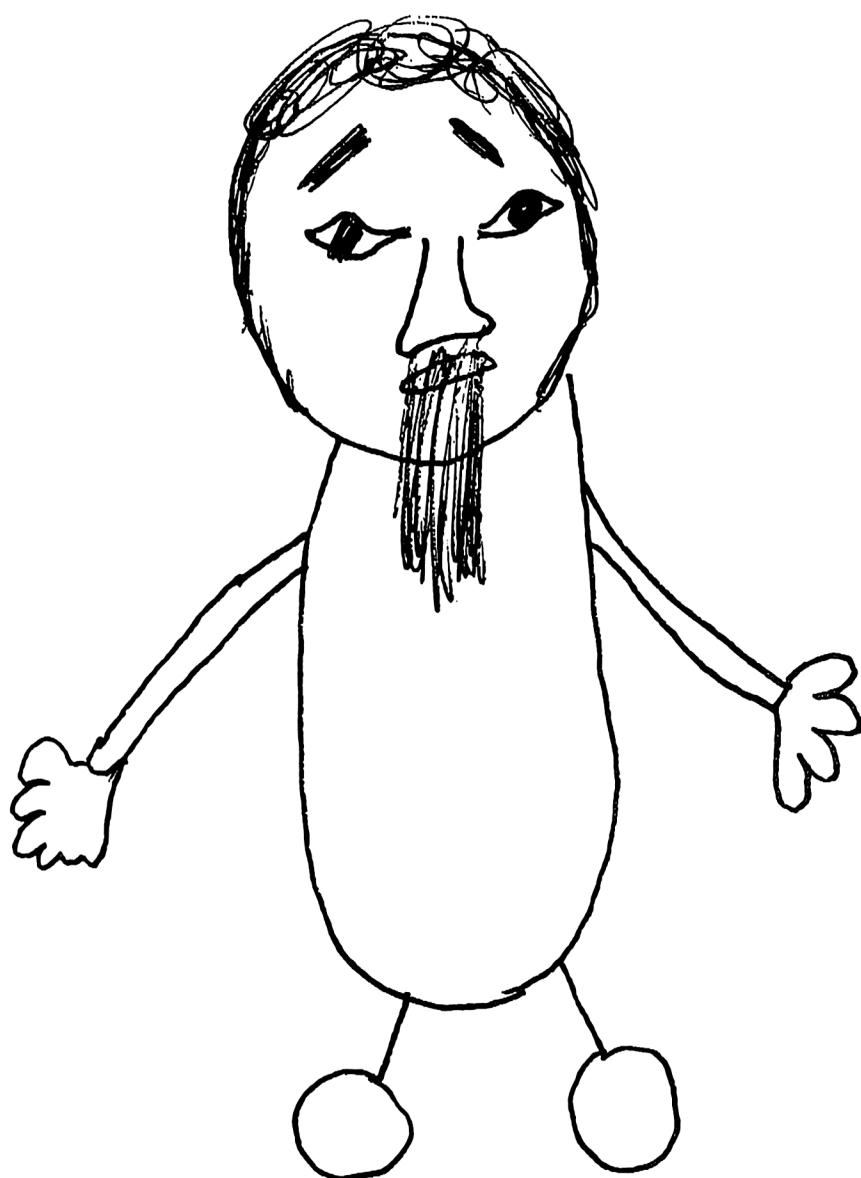


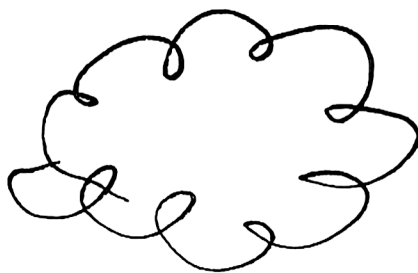


God









The

End.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "V. Peter". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

WHAT DOES GOD LOOK LIKE?

WHERE DOES GOD LIVE?

WHAT DOES GOD DO ALL DAY LONG?

WHAT DOES GOD WEAR?

FAMOUS PEOPLE GOD LOOKS LIKE

THE BIBLICAL GOD

GODs TO PONDER

Responses to
“Children’s Pictures of God.”

“A very interesting theme—to far more than active church or synagogue people.”

“You have a truly important, provocative and original book. It has the possibility of great and extensive appeal.”

“I found it delightful.”

“I certainly enjoyed the pictures!”

“I caught my husband looking through the book and he never reads anything but the sports page.”

“Really makes you think!”